THE EVOLUTION OF THE KINGDOM

WM. B. RILEY

Central BAPTIST
THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
in memoriam
H. A. BOLLE
presented by
MRS. E. L. PRINE
KANSAS CITY, KANSAS

Berkouwer

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The Evolution of the Kingdom

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(From Serial Issue in Grace and Truth)

PUBLISHERS

CHAS. C. COOK
150 Nassau Street, New York City

S. W. PARTRIDGE & CO.
22 Old Bailey, London, E. C.

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A FOREWORD.

¶ That "Blessed Hope" is a theme that will continue to charm the Christian heart so long as our Lord delays His Coming. The men that entertain it most heartily and intelligently never deny the deity of Christ, nor dispute the authority of the Bible, nor decline from "the faith once for all delivered."

¶ It is so fundamental in Scripture study; so essential to spiritual living and so stimulating to Christian service, that it well-nigh represents the sufficient, if not the solitary, antidote to the present day apostacy. We add this volume to the splendid library of literature upon the same general subject already in circulation, confidently expecting that the Coming and Kingdom of our Lord will be made to appear both important and precious to as many as shall choose to read and study the same. We ask no greater return than the gratitude of as many hearts as shall be led to the careful consideration of this subject.

Yours "till He come."

WM. B. RILEY.

THE KINGDOM OF GOD—ITS DEFINITION.

JOHN WATSON'S sentence, "Two finds have been made within recent years: the Divine Fatherhood and the Kingdom of God," involves a twofold error.

¶ "The Divine Fatherhood," by which he means the "universal Fatherhood of God" instead of being a theological "find" is a theological fiction! "The Kingdom of God" has never been lost to the church; only obscured, often, by misinterpretation. If we may judge by His own words (Luke 4:43), the most holy necessity laid upon Jesus was "the preaching of the Kingdom of God;" and if "handling aright the word of God," means the conformity of teaching and preaching to the plan and points of Bible emphasis, then "the Kingdom of God" should never fail to hold the first place in the thought and instruction of Christendom. If Prophet and Apostle are to be accepted as our inspired guides, theocracy—or God on the throne—is the scarlet thread in the Old and New Testament teaching. The Pentateuch presents no other plan; the Psalms sound no other note; the Major and Minor Prophets see no other vision; the Forerunner of Jesus framed no other philosophy, while the most matchless exponent of "the Kingdom of God" was the Master himself. The Word being consulted, the Kingdom of God is

"The one far-off Divine event
To which the whole creation moves."

¶ It has been said that no definition of the Kingdom can

be found in the Scriptures. Of course that depends upon what one means by a definition. If he is looking for a solitary passage that tells all that the Kingdom is, and all that it is not, the search will be in vain; but if he is comparing Scripture with Scripture to find out what the Kingdom is, then the Bible would be unworthy the title—"The Revelation"—were the effort not crowned with success.

¶ It may be taken for granted that the term Βασιλεια, correctly translated "kingdom" is employed with discrimination by the divine writers. And when, by research, we find some form of this term used in the Septuagint version of the Old Testament 250 times in round numbers, and in the New Testament 160 times, and in the Gospels alone over 100 times, both the importance of the theme and the probable information to be derived from its study are more than suggested; they are certain. The sympathetic study of all these texts would involve the definition of the Kingdom, reveal the evolution of the Kingdom, determine the location of the Kingdom, fix the citizenship of the Kingdom, and, setting up the Kingdom, seat the King.

¶ We have said that it would involve

The Definition of the Kingdom

showing that it will be at once an ideality and a reality; that it will be alike ethical and physical, and that it will find expression in both a theophany and a theocracy.

¶ **It will be at once an ideality and a reality.** This is a point at which post- and pre-millennialists part company. "The Kingdom of God" according to post-millennialists, is an ideality; according to pre-millennialists, it is both an ideality and a reality. The strongest book, from a post-

millennial standpoint, brought from the press in recent years, is Dr. Goodspeed's volume, "The Second Advent." Bruce may charm with his style, and Boardman impress one with his literary ability, his analytical and apparently logical methods, and many others with their show of learning; but Goodspeed has this splendid superiority, viz., that he deals with the Scriptures.

¶ Concerning the "Kingdom of God," Goodspeed says, "Post-millennialists believe that our Lord set up His Kingdom at His first coming, and that He took His seat as Ruler in this Kingdom, when He rose from the dead and all power was given into His hands. He is now seated on David's throne, ruling the Kingdom of Grace, which is His only Kingdom on earth."

¶ Few post-millennial writers essentially dissent from this position. That circumstance is all the more remarkable when one remembers, as Bruce concedes, that the expression, "the Kingdom of Grace," employed so insistently and by so many, is absolutely unknown to the Scriptures.

¶ Boardman also concedes that the idea of a literal kingdom was the expectation of every Old Testament sage and prophet; was in the minds of the Eastern Magi when they came asking, "Where is he that was born King of the Jews?"; was with the devout Simeon when he looked for the consolation of Israel; was entertained by Nathaniel when he exclaimed, "Rabbi, thou art the Son of God, thou art the King of Israel!" John believed it when he asked, "Art thou the Coming One? or look we for another?"; the guest at the Pharisee's table thought it, when he said, "Blessed is He who shall eat bread in the Kingdom of God." It was the conception of the twelve when they contended with each other as to who

should be counted "greatest in the coming kingdom;" it was the opinion of James and John when they requested: "Grant unto us that the one shall sit on thy right hand and the other on thy left in thy kingdom"; it was the hope of the Pharisees when they asked Jesus, "When the kingdom of God comes," etc.; of the crowd when they shouted, "Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord, even the King of Israel," and of the disciples when they asked their risen Savior, "Lord, dost thou at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?"

¶ The charge that these all alike misconceived the promised kingdom, requires proof. The prophecies of the Old Testament had not been difficult to understand, and were not commonly mis-interpreted. Notwithstanding the fact that the leaders of Israel looked for the establishment of a temporal throne at the first appearance of Jesus, they neither forgot nor misconstrued the essential facts of that appearance. When Herod, alarmed for his supremacy, inquired where the King of the Jews should be born, the Scribes properly replied, "In Bethlehem, of Judea, for thus it is written by the prophet, 'Out of thee shall come forth a governor that shall rule my people Israel." The hardships of His humble life were also in literal accord with Isaiah's speech, "Butter and honey shall he eat." His crucifixion between malefactors, and burial in Joseph's tomb, the same prophet had predicted: "And they made his grave with the wicked, and with a rich man in his death." Only those that reject the inspiration of the Word of God deny the fulfillment of the prophecy, "Thou wilt not leave my soul to sheol, neither wilt thou suffer thy Holy One to see corruption" (Psalm 16:10); or dispute the correction of Paul's literal interpre-

tation of the Old Testament Scriptures that he should be "raised" on the third day (1 Cor. 15:4).

¶ If every Old Testament sage and prophet and every New Testament believer were mistaken in expecting a literal kingdom, is it conceivable that Jesus should have left this mistake without a word of correction, and even confirmed the misconception by personal speech, which if literally received, would keep up the error? Such conduct did not commonly characterize Christ. Whenever He used a figure of speech, and His auditors misinterpreted it, He took pains to correct them instantly. When He declared concerning Lazarus, "He sleepeth," and they answered, "Then he doeth well," He immediately set their thought right by saying plainly, "Lazarus is dead." When He used the figure of leaven, and His disciples thought He meant that which was put into bread, He carefully corrected them by saying, "No, I mean the doctrine of the Pharisees and Sadducees." If there had been no actual Kingdom to come would not Christ have said, "Ye have misunderstood the word—My Kingdom is not a literal one; it is only spiritual"?

¶ If it be answered that Jesus did say, "My Kingdom is not of this world," we reply, "That is no proof that it was not to be in the world." The phrase "of the world," as employed in the New Testament, commonly means partaking of its evil spirit, and has no reference whatever to location. On His own authority His disciples were "not of the world," and yet they were in it. He was "not of the world," and yet "He was in the world!"

¶ There is not a feature of a literal kingdom lacking in the biblical description of the Kingdom of God. It is to have a literal King in the person of Jesus, who is not a pure spirit, but God manifest in the flesh, "and the gov-

ernment shall be upon his shoulder" (Isa. 9:6). It is to have a literal throne, to which Jesus shall succeed, and it is not "the throne of Grace" but "the throne of David" (Isa. 9:7). There is to be a literal location for that throne—"The Lord himself shall reign in Mount Zion in Jerusalem" (Isa. 24:23). The supremacy is to cover a real dominion "from the River to the ends of the earth (Zech. 9:10). This office of authority is to have its real aides in the persons of certain regenerate ones, that shall "sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel" (Matt. 12:28): in the most faithful who shall "have authority over cities" (Luke 19:17); and from the martyrs who shall "reign with Him a thousand years" (Rev. 20:4).

¶ The impression that a reign of grace is incompatible with the exercise of real regal authority and command is disproven by the history of every good king. King Oscar of Sweden passed away but yesterday; and either the tributes paid to his blessed memory by the citizens of his own land and the Swedish sojourners in our own country, were sickly adulations, or else it is possible to so combine the exercise of official authority with the exhibitions of love as to command at once a political obedience and a personal affection.

¶ **It will be alike physical and ethical.** The unwarranted custom of spiritualizing Scripture has resulted, for those who employ it, in the disemboweling of plain speech The statement, "The Kingdom of Heaven is spiritual—a reign in men's hearts—and not material over earth as a territory" (See Goodspeed, p. 111), overlooks the biblical distinction of the terms Kingdom of Heaven and Kingdom of God, and is an attempt to exalt the moral at the expense of the material, which is neither warranted by the

Word nor essential to the ethical meaning of Christ's ministry. True, it is written of the kingdom of God, "It is not eating and drinking, but righteousness, and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost!" But that does not signify that no eating or drinking shall characterize that Kingdom when it shall come, any more than Jesus' statement, "The life is more than meat: and the body more than raiment," is a warrant for attempting to live without food or clothing. The truth is that Jesus, in His risen body, did eat—a hint at least that the Kingdom saints may do the same. His promise is "Ye may eat and drink at my table in my Kingdom" (Luke 22:30). We have already seen that the statement concerning the Kingdom that "it is not of this world" in no wise militates against its location "in the world" any more than the statement that His disciples were "not of the world." To be sure, those that are fitted for the Kingdom must be regenerate according to John 3:3-5, as Goodspeed argues. But does regeneracy dispense with the flesh? And, they must be righteous (Matt. 5:20), but does righteousness militate against reality? If position in this kingdom is gained through meekness and humility (Matt. 18:4), does any one imagine that either trait inheres only in the immaterial?

¶ If, therefore, the subjects of the Kingdom are to be as physical as were the flesh and bones of Christ which He bade the unbelieving handle and see, then who dares say that "the kingdom" "is not territorial" as well as spiritual; that "its enlargement is not by taking in new lands, as well as new hearts," and that in order to its establishment, "Christ need not come again in person" (See Goodspeed, p. 114)?

¶ The subject of His personal return would hardly seem to be in dispute since He has expressly said, "I will come

again"; and Paul has associated "His appearance and His kingdom" (2 Tim. 4:1), and His own parable of the pounds involves the plain teaching that He has gone "to receive for himself a kingdom and to return." If He is not to make conquest in new lands as well as in new hearts, then the language of the seventy-second Psalm is strange indeed. It is written there that "He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth. They that dwell in the wilderness shall bow before Him; and his enemies shall lick the dust. The kings of Tarshish and of the Isles shall bring presents. The kings of Sheba and Seba shall offer gifts. Yea, all kings shall fall down before Him: all nations shall serve him."

¶ I believe with Prof. H. Lummis that if there were but a single Old Testament prophecy of this Kingdom, and that the prophecy of Daniel, it would dispel all doubt as to its literalness and its location. When Pharaoh had a dream of the seven fat and the seven lean kine, and Joseph interpreted it, his prophecy became the mold of history. Its fulfillment was literal. Who has been instructed to say that Daniel's interpretation of Nebuchadnezzar's dream is not to be so taken? It would almost seem that the great Prophet Daniel anticipated the modern spiritualizing method and meant to condemn it when, after having interpreted the dream, he concludes, "The great God hath made known to the king what shall come to pass hereafter, and the dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof sure" (Dan. 2:45). A large part of that prophecy has been literally fulfilled! It is a strange thing to ask the privilege of stepping into the middle of God's processes to declare that the remainder of it will be after another method.

¶ Concerning the argument that since the prophecies about the birth, life, and death of our Lord, were literally fulfilled, we should expect the same concerning the Kingdom, Dr. Goodspeed says, "Those prophecies were incapable of any other than a literal fulfillment" (p. 93). But every reformed Jew will tell you they never were intended to be taken literally; and his statement has exactly as much warrant from the Word as has the position of those that proclaim against "the Kingdom" for which all Christendom, in obedience to its Christ, is praying "Come!"

¶ Discredit the pseudo-political phase of this kingdom as you will, still even John Watson is compelled to admit that "politics are, after all, a necessary machinery * * * though ideals come first." His statement, "When Jesus denied himself to politics he did not abdicate His Kingdom," is without occasion! True, He scorned the world's throne when offered by Satan; He also refused the crown and sceptre proffered by an unregenerate mob; but He never hinted that He would reject these same insignia of power when the time of the Divine appointment should come. On the contrary, the Scriptures are clear that when, in the end of the age, the seventh angel soundeth, there will be heard great voices in heaven saying, "The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and his Christ, and he shall reign forever and ever" (Rev. 11:15). That this is a promise to the Man from Nazareth could hardly be doubted when it is remembered that on the occasion of the announcement of Mary's conception, the Angel said, "And thou shalt bring forth a Son, and shalt call His name Jesus. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Most High: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father

David * * * and of His kingdom there shall be no end" (Luke 1:31, 32).

¶ **It is both a theophany and a theocracy.** A theophany is a manifestation of God to, or rather, through, the human soul. A theocracy is the recognition of God as the only rightful Ruler, and a reception of His revelation as civil law. So far as the Kingdom of God has any place in the earth at the present time, it is a theophany, or a manifestation of God's sovereignty in, or through, His saints. But the Holy Scriptures have ever held before believers the sure promise of a theocracy—a pledge to the Prince of Peace—"the child born" and "the son given" —that "the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and of peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to establish it, and to uphold it with judgment and with righteousness from henceforth even forever. The zeal of Jehovah of hosts shall perform this" (Isa. 9:6-7).

¶ But are we not told expressly that "the kingdom of God cometh not with observation"? Certainly! That is the proof that the Kingdom is not yet; and is not to be confounded with the Church, nor with any of the visible fruits of a spiritual life. Such may be easily observed, and somewhat accurately measured. But the introduction of "the Kingdom" is rather to be associated with the sudden appearance of Jesus Christ, the coming of which is as incapable of observation as is the formation of that lightning, that, in an unexpected moment, bursts into glory, "from the East and is seen even unto the West" (Matt. 24:27).

¶ It is little wonder that the people who believe that the

only Kingdom of God referred to in the Bible is that which is now being constructed by christian endeavor, become discouraged. Inadvertently Bruce concedes that no other result can be expected. He says, "when John spoke of the Kingdom he meant the people of Ishael converted to righteousness, and in consequence blessed with national prosperity. And that being his ideal and aim, he was a gloomy man, and those who were about him became affected with his gloom. For he saw, too soon and too well, that the conversion of Israel to righteousness was a very improbable event. And so, despairing of the nation, and hoping only for the salvation of a small remnant, he began to talk of 'a winnowing fan to separate wheat from chaff, and of an axe of judgment to hew down the worthless tree.'"

¶ While misinterpreting John, Bruce accurately exploits the result of looking for a kingdom that is dependent upon the conversion of the whole people to righteousness. If the Bible proffers us nothing better, the present outlook is gloomy enough to generate poignant grief. For two thousand years the Church has been at work in the world, and we are still praying, with good occasion, "Thy kingdom come." Three to four hundred millions of earth's inhabitants are nominally Christian! It has been said, with sufficient conservatism, that perhaps not more than one in ten, or thirty to forty millions, of these are genuinely loyal to God, being regenerate by His Spirit, leaving practically the whole of the fourteen hundred millions yet to be converted before the Kingdom has fully come.

¶ If to this it be answered: "But the times past have been those of seed-sowing and the centuries are now ripening to the harvest, false religions are just ready to

fall, and the religion of Christ to become the faith of all nations," we ask for the evidence! The Christianity of Palestine perished on the very soil that sprouted it; the Christianity of Rome became corrupt at the very time when the Church was in the place of power; the Christianity of Europe is being discredited at this moment, and assigned a place in the Pantheon of Religions by its own and leading apostles. The subject of ever-insistent debate in America is whether the candidates for the ministry are not diminishing, and the denominations—which are all too slowly increasing their numbers—are not as certainly going into spiritual decay. Horton ("Teachings of Jesus," p. 27) frankly admits: "Today a Christian country is one in which a majority of the people appear absolutely indifferent to religion; a majority of those who are not indifferent are without enthusiasm, without passion, without zeal; while the most earnest are usually sectarian rather than religious, capable only of interest in their church or their system or their shibboleth."

¶ Nearly thirty years ago, in that matchless conference called by Nathaniel West and others, a speaker raised this question, "Do the possible thirty millions of genuine Christians give enough to make all the gifts of all the rest average a cent a week for the thirty millions for mission effort, properly so-called? Do the aggregates of all the purely missionary contributions of the world amount to $15,600,000 per annum?" The pitiful thing about this question is that after all the boasted progress of these most remarkable years, the interrogation is pertinent still; while the question with which he followed it is nothing less than painful: "Is the amount paid over by actual Christians, that Christ's mandate, 'Go ye into all the world and preach my gospel to every creature,' may be

obeyed as great as is the amount expended by the Church of God for needless—nay, for dangerous and degrading luxuries, such as wine, poor tobacco, and even stronger stimulants?" If you declare "This is pessimism," I answer, "For those that have no other prospect than a Kingdom resulting from the regeneration of the whole world, it is!" But not for those of us that know that when "this gospel of the kingdom shall have been preached in all the world for a witness, then shall the end of this age come." It shall terminate with the appearance of the King Himself, the establishment of His throne in righteousness, the lifting of the deception that has blinded sinners till now, by the chaining of Satan—the old deceiver—and the casting of him into the pit that he shall do his work no more. Then "shall a nation be born in a day." Then shall that major promise of the Minor Prophet speedily be verified, and "the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of Jehovah as the waters cover the sea" (Hab. 2:14). Then shall Daniel's vision be realized (Daniel 2:1).

¶ If one want to argue, as some do, that this prospect is too material to be pleasing, we only answer by expressing our regret that God's appointments are not his pleasure. If he say further, "It is too sensual to be spiritual," we reply by questioning, "Is it scriptural?" There may be such a thing as learning at last that God's spiritual Kingdom is all the more glorious because of its material side, and the outlook of those that entertain his "blessed hope" may prove at last to have been just as broad as biblical. Prof. Lummis says, "Many a visitor has ascended the slope of Mt. Washington, drawn by the snorting iron horse whose neighing echoed back from cliff and ravine, and has seen that rugged, rock-crowned summit

gray with the mosses and lichens of unnumbered centuries, as the misty robe that draped the giant peak was lifted by the careering winds. He has a right to speak of the sublime view which he has seen. But he has made only one ascent; he has looked from one position only, although a favored spot it may be, and one that affords the finest view of the monarch of New England hills. But if he forgets or ignores the carriage road up from the Glen House; if he overlooks the bridle path that winds up through the wooded hills and bending valleys and steep, precipitous acclivities from the Crawford; if he counts not the devious footway of the lone pedestrian who, by some hitherto untrodden course, has clambered to the crown of the mountain king, he has not a complete picture of the loftiest of the White Hills." The modern theologian that conceiving the Kingdom of Jesus, looks upward and views the blue sky and gold and crimson clouds, and the brightness of the resplendent sun, has a charming picture, even if it be a little ethereal. But to complete its beauty he needs the hills and valleys, flowing as of old in the land of Canaan, with the milk and honey; the palace towers of Jerusalem, the golden, white-robed company marching with crowns on their heads and with palms in their hands to the strains of celestial music; the opening doors of the royal mansion, and the broad table spread with ambrosial viands, fit for the children and the brothers and sisters of a king; and seated guests, the patriarchs and prophets, and all the godly race.

¶ No timidity induced by skepticism within the nominal Church of God, or without, shall make me 'minish aught of what my Father's legacy warrants me to expect. I shall see the King in all His glory, and be fellow-heir with Abraham. In company with the meek I shall pos-

sess the earth. An humble and unworthy brother of Jesus Christ, I am to have the body of my humiliation made like the body of His glory.

THE KINGDOM OF GOD—ITS EVOLUTION.

THE most popular word in the English language, at the present moment, is "Evolution." The phrase that Darwin adopted to express a purely speculative theory, has attained the distinction of a fad in the so-called scientific world; and some ministers of religion, to prove that they also are scientific, have taught their tongues the shibboleth.

¶ It should not be forgotten that the truest things are seldom in supreme favor. Splendid facts do not often attain the eminence of superior fads. Popularity is ephemeral, and when the wave of excitement created by the adoption of the term "evolution" is past, sober second thought will show that the Scriptures, sanely interpreted, and Science, properly demonstrated, bear a common testimony as to the origin and development of things; and that the only evolution to be found in either, and in both, is the evolution of the individual, with its related improvement of species; not that which starts an entirely new species, nor so changes an old one as to make a new one of it. The Kingdom of God knows neither spontaneous generation nor transmutation of species.

¶ That use of the word, once determined, (and surely the drift of both scientific and theological thought is now in the direction of such definition) Evolution will fitly describe the progress of the Kingdom of God. In fact, long before Darwin or Huxley opened their eyes to the natural light of the world, Jesus, who is the "true Light

that lighteth every man that cometh into it," was saying, "So is the Kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed upon the earth; and should sleep and rise night and day, and the seed should spring up and grow, he knoweth not how. The earth beareth fruit of herself; first the blade, then the ear, then the full grain in the ear" (Mark 4:26-28). In that single phrase he formulated at once scientific and Scriptural Evolution, and showed how the Kingdom of God will follow its lines in rooting, flowering and fruiting.

¶ We propose at this time to follow that analogy to its natural limits in the discussion of the Kingdom of God.

The Kingdom Roots

itself in the hearts of the saved. While aware that such a phrase is not in accord with the most common interpretation of the Kingdom of God, we are perfectly willing to have it subjected to the infallible test, "To the law and to the testimony: If they speak not according to this word, surely there is no morning for them" (Isa. 8:20).

¶ When we say that the Kingdom roots itself in the hearts of the saved, we appreciate that the expression involves and necessities certain others that must be set in order.

¶ First, **The world cannot germinate the Kingdom of God.** The King of Glory, in His origin, is contrasted with Adam after this manner, "The first man is of the earth, earthy; the second man is of heaven" (1 Cor. 15:47). Going back to Daniel's vision one will find the same contrast between world-kingdoms and the Kingdom of God. The world-kingdoms are represented by a great image (Dan. 2:31); and while its head was of fine gold,

its breast and its arms of silver, its belly and its thighs of brass, its legs of iron, its feet part of iron and part of clay (Dan. 2:32-33), it was not only "in the world" but "it was of the world." Even its finest parts, its head, and breast, and arms, were yet of the earth-earthy! But the Kingdom to come was represented by a stone "cut out without hands," and hurled, as if from heaven, upon the image breaking it in pieces, and grinding it until it became "like the chaff of the summer threshing floor," and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain and filled the whole earth. It found its location and development in the earth; but it came down from heaven.

¶ The characteristics of this Kingdom, then, are these: It is not of man, nor by man, but the God of heaven sets it up (Dan. 2:44). It is not temporary, but eternal! The great kingdoms symbolized in the dream by parts of the image pass away; the coming Kingdom will never be destroyed; nor shall the Sovereignty thereof be left to another people (Dan. 2:44); but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever. The source whence it comes is not from the plain where men dwell; but out of the mountain, which, in the Word, is the figure of the heavenlies and the place of the Divine presence. In Exodus 15:17, the "mountain" is described after this manner, "The place, O Jehovah, which thou hast made for thee to dwell in." In Exodus 19:3, "Moses went unto God, and Jehovah called unto him out of the mountain." The Psalmist sings, "Great is Jehovah, and highly to be praised in the city of our God, in his holy mountain." In that Messianic Psalm, 72:3, is it not written, "The mountains shall bring peace to the people," etc.? This figure in-

volves the fact of which Jesus spake when He said, "My kingdom is not of this world" (Jno. 18:36); and also the partial explanation of many passages that make the Kingdom of God "of heaven" and "heavenly." That it is located in the earth in no wise necessitates either that the earth be its author or its sustainer. The Chinese lily is capable of growth and reproduction without the slightest contact with the soil; the water and air, which are of the first heaven, sufficing both for the production of seed and its germination and development—a figure in nature which Campbell Morgan must intend to employ for illustration when he says, "You can not grow the tulips of the Kingdom of God except you get the bulbs from heaven."

¶ **"The Word" is not the Kingdom in embryo.** One that has sought diligently to be a good student of the Bible feels ashamed of his superficial reading, and surprised at the oversight of his brethren, when he comes suddenly upon such an interpretation of "the Parables of the Kingdom" as that recently put forth by Campbell Morgan; and has his attention called to the fact that when Jesus came to explain the "Kingdom" in the parable of the Sower, he did not make the abstract Word of God the seed of the Kingdom; but rather, the Word—incarnate, and incarnate only; saying, "When any one heareth the word of the Kingdom, and understands it not, then cometh the evil one, and snatcheth away that which hath been sown in his heart. This is he that was sown by the way-side. And he that was sown upon the rocky places, this is he that heareth the word, and straightway with joy receiveth it; yet hath he not root in himself, but endureth for a while; and when tribulation or persecution ariseth, because of the

word, straightway he stumbleth. And he that was sown among the thorns, this is he that heareth the word, and the care of the world, and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the word, and he becometh unfruitful. And he that was sown upon the good ground, this is he that heareth the word, and understandeth it; who verily beareth fruit, and bringeth forth, some a hundred-fold, some sixty, some thirty" (Matt. 13:19-23).

¶ It will be noticed also, if one follows that marvelous thirteenth chapter of Matthew, that the next parable continues the same figure, "The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man that soweth seed in his field; but while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went away." Tares and wheat are the figures not of truth and error, but of good and evil men, for Jesus himself also explained this parable, saying, "The field is the world; and the good seed, these are the sons of the kingdom; and the tares are the sons of the evil one" (Matt. 13:38). What point all of this gives to that marvelous statement in the epistle to the Corinthians, "The Kingdom of God is not in word, but in power" (1 Cor. 4:20). The abstract word has no power. The world never saw such an illustration of the truth of John Watson's words as the Kingdom of God is to exhibit: "Do you wish a cause to endure hardness, to rejoice in sacrifice, to accomplish mighty works, to retain forever the dew of its youth? Give it the best chance, the sanction of love. Do not state it in books; do not defend it with argument. These are aids of the second order; if they succeed, it is a barren victory—the reason only has been won; if they fail, it is a hopeless defeat, the reason has now been exasperated. Identify your cause with a person." Christ

did link His cause to human lives! The Kingdom of God roots itself in the hearts of the saved.

¶ The saved alone, then, are "the seed of the Kingdom." "The good seed, these are the sons of the kingdom" (Matt. 13:38). Mark you, they are described as the "good seed." There is a distinct difference between the seed and the fruit of the seed. To argue that because the Scriptures say, "The good seed, these are the sons of the kingdom," therefore the kingdom is already in the earth is exactly the same as if I should argue, when, in May, I have one day sowed some radish seed, that I have in hand a crop of radishes; or melon seed, that I can immediately present melons. Such argument ignores alike the difference between the seed and the fruit of it, and the necessary intervention of a season in order to make one bring forth the other. If there is any one thing that the Kingdom parables in Matthew 13, make perfectly evident it is the distinction between the seeds of the kingdom and the flowers and the fruit of the same. The principle involved in social settlement work is according to the Divine plan; its weakness has resulted from the circumstance that those who have most fostered this movement have too often reduced it to a physical plane, and have sought to show the submerged tenth how to wash their hands and faces, make and mend their garments, sweep and air their homes and cultivate flowers in their front and back yards—results of importance, but still, of secondary consideration! The man that has been planted in the black hole of Chicago, as Harry Monroe has been planted there, to be tidy in person, chaste in speech, careful in conduct, that those that see him might derive subsidiary benefits from these circumstances, but above all, to live

Christ by precept and by practice, he is "the good seed" that brings forth thirty, or sixty, or a hundred-fold. Morgan is quite correct when he says, "Plant the son of the kingdom in the midst of an age that is against the King and he will exert an influence for the kingdom." Such a seed was Paul to the paganism of the first century; such a seed was Luther to God-forgetting Germany; such a seed was Judson to heathen India; and such a seed was Livingston to darkest Africa. Bruce (p. 54) speaks of "a kingdom of grace in order to a kingdom of holiness." A slight change only, and his language would be scriptural, "Salvation by grace" or "the experience of grace," in order to the kingdom of holiness. Paul writes to the Colossians, of Him "who delivered us out of the power of darkness, and translated us into the kingdom of the son of his love, in which we have redemption" (1:13-14), which, for Gentiles at least, is the revelation of that "mystery," "Christ in them the hope of glory"(Col. 1:27). To them it is written, "When the chief Shepherd shall be manifested, ye shall receive the crown of glory which fadeth not away" (1 Pet. 5:4). For a long time before the Republic of Cuba was a realized fact the seeds of it existed in those who, in spirit, had revolted from Spain and were ardently at work to induce their fellows to throw off the tyrannical yoke and elect a new ruler. The seeds of republicanism were everywhere in Cuban soil when as yet the Republic had not appeared. And wherever, today, you find a Christian man or a Christian woman these are "the seeds of that Kingdom" for the appearance of which we pray, "Our Father which art in heaven, thy Kingdom come." The business of the church is to go on diligently scattering the

seed until the Master, the Son of Man, shall pronounce the harvest ready, and shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his Kingdom all things that cause stumblings, and them that do iniquity, and shall cast them into the furnace of fire; then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father" (Matt. 13:43).

¶ But this last Scripture anticipates and plainly suggests certain other processes in the evolution of the Kingdom, namely those of flowers and fruits.

The Kingdom Flowers

in the Savior's Reappearance. Having begun with Christ's own parable of the seed, it behooves us to abide by that symbolism to the end of this study. We call your attention, therefore, to three essential and scientific facts concerning the flower period of the plant:—

¶ (1) **Flowers are the product of seed, sustenance, and season.** Concerning the seed of the Kingdom we have spoken sufficiently; regarding the sustenance of that seed but briefly; and a few more words may be justly added. We have already seen that plants that were by nature of the earth and earthy, can, under the hand of man, be separated entirely from the soil and sustained to the point of perfect development by water and air. It is hardly to be supposed impossible, therefore, that God can take the man, who by his first birth, is of the earth, earthy, and in the process of regeneration grant him another nature, and separate him from the world; nor is it impossible for God to bring to this spiritual nature sustenance from heaven. The manna of the Old Testament did not come out of the ground, nor, as some naturalists have maintained, fall from the

trees. God's ancient Israel were "fed with the bread of heaven" (Ps. 105:40). It is a remarkable circumstance that air and water—able to sustain natural life—are in the Scriptures, symbols of the Spirit and of the Word. The Greek term most often translated "spirit" is also correctly rendered "air." When Jesus was talking with Nicodemus he emphasized this symbolism by saying, "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the voice thereof, but knowest not whence it cometh, and whither it goeth; so is every one that is born of the Spirit" (Jno. 3:8). Paul, in his epistle to the Ephesians, almost identifies water and the Word, by saying, "Christ also loved the church, and gave himself up for it; that he might sanctify it, having cleansed it by the washing of water with the word" (Eph. 5:25-26). The Spirit and the Word—these sustain the seed.

¶ That that remains therefore to be further elaborated is the question of the season. Dr. Goodspeed (p. 103) says: "It does not directly concern us, in this discussion, to inquire in what sense the kingdom was present during our Lord's life, and in what sense still to come. We believe, however, the distinction is to be found in this—while the kingdom, as a spiritual rule in the hearts of men, had begun, during our Lord's life, as He taught its principles and gained followers, it was not until He had completed His atoning work and had been gifted with 'all authority in heaven and earth' (Matt. 28:18) to administer its government and advance it among men, that it was formally instituted." Dr. Goodspeed is right in this statement, but wrong in his induction. When did the High Priest count His atoning work complete? When the blood of the lamb was shed? Nay! When he had carried that blood within

the vail? Nay! A careful study of Leviticus will show that that work was only complete when he came forth from the Holy place to array himself again in his glorious garments. The testimony of the Word is clear that Christ is now engaged in the office of intercession; the atonement is complete only so far as the offering of the Lamb of God is concerned (Heb. 9:11-12). "So Christ also, having been offered, to bear the sins of many, shall appear a second time apart from sin, to them that wait for him, unto salvation" (Heb. 9:28). All power in heaven and in earth is given unto Jesus, but it is all too evident that the time of its exercise in the earth is not yet. "The heathen also are given to Him for his inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for His possession," but the promise, like that made to Abraham and his seed, is to be fulfilled only after what men regard a long season, but to Him to whom "a thousand years are but as yesterday, when it is past" or as "a watch in the night," it is "a little season." If the tiny flower, destined to adorn nature for a few brief hours, requires an entire summer to bring it to blossom, shall the time to pass before the Rose of Sharon shall break upon the world with His eternal beauty, be regarded as too long? Not so in the opinion of the apostle Paul, who reminds us "Ye have need of patience, that, having done the will of God, ye may receive the promise. For yet a little while, He that cometh shall come, and shall not tarry" (Heb. 10:26-27). ¶ **Flowers are the glory-period of the plant's development.** So the flowering period of the Kingdom is when the "Son of Man shall come in the glory of the Father with His angels" (Matt. 16:27); "and shall sit on the throne of His glory" (Matt. 19-28); and "then shall ye

also, with Him, be manifested in glory" (Col. 3:4). This is the blessed hour for which "the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now," "waiting for the revealing of the sons of God." It is a singular circumstance that the analogy of this growing seed may be tested to such minutiae of application. In nature the season essential to the producing of a flower is a comparatively long one, while the actual process of blooming requires so short a time as often to take careful watchers by surprise. My revered teacher, Dr. John A. Broadus, says, "I remember, once, a neighboring professor sent us invitations to his home for a summer evening, saying that he had a century plant which seemed about to bloom, and asking us to come and watch with him till it blossomed. It was a delightful occasion, you may fancy. With music and conversation we passed on through the pleasant summer evening hours, on till past midnight. Then we gathered around and gazed on the plain, wonderful thing that had lived longer than any of us had lived; and now, for the first time, was about to blossom for the admiration of beholders." "Surely," said Dr. Broadus, "Jesus Christ is the blooming Century Plant; the beautiful Millennium Flower"—the glory of the Kingdom of God. "When the chief Shepherd shall be manifested," and all believing ones have "received the crown of glory that fadeth not away;" when the King shall have come, what adornment will the world suddenly receive! The most bewitching little landscape that ever marked one spot of earth at mid-summer season will seem plain indeed beside its whole glorious beauty, when every believer's grave shall have given birth to a body fashioned like the glorious body of the Lord, and every believing

mortal shall, in the wink of an eye, put on immortality. No wonder Gordon remarks that when the chief apostle, bounding forward in thought to this period, speaks of its "far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory" (2 Cor. 4:17) his language becomes well nigh untranslatable, he so joins hyperbole to hyperbole in his efforts to express its transcendent blessedness.

¶ **Flowers are the promise of the perfected harvest.** It is easily evident to careful students of the Word that the coming of Jesus and the establishment of the kingdom is only the beginning of the Kingdom's glory. Hence, the significance of Paul's statement, "Christ must reign until he hath put all enemies under his feet." That involves the grinding to powder of the world-kingdoms of Daniel's vision; that involves the conversion and restoration of Israel—the burden of Old Testament prophecy; that involves the fulfillment of the promise of the "nations for an inheritance; the uttermost parts of the earth for His possession." Oh, it is a glorious prospect—this millennial period, when the Kingdom of God shall be flowering into full beauty! When George Lorimer was yet alive he said, "As I understand it, the kingdom reveals, in what the author of 'Ecce Homo' calls 'The Divine Society' what will ultimately be realized in the social state; but when that time arrives, the spiritual empire will always be grander than the earthly commonwealth; will encompass it with its gracious environments and atmosphere it with its heavenly influences. I have somewhere read of Mr. Whymper having announced that he had traced in a piece of mica-schist an exact miniature of the peak of the Matterhorn, whence he had chipped it with his hammer. He says that the same causes which sculptured the huge homogeneous

mass, shaped also each of its parts in the likeness of the whole. And similarly the social state derives its essential character from the Kingdom, is fostered by it, grows out of it, is even a part of it; and surely it can not be hard to believe that the Son of Man designed by this relationship to demonstrate the possibility of the ideal being actualized, and of the dream becoming the blessed commonplace of the awakened future."

The Kingdom Fruits

in the Father's supremacy.

¶ **The earthly supremacy of the Son is for a season only.** At this point Pre- and Post-millennialists are well nigh in agreement! Whether the thousand years are to be accepted as literal, or as a symbol of a considerable period, they consent alike that it will come to an end. We are disposed to let that period stand for what the Scriptures say. In the many references in the Word of God, to this glorious era of the Kingdom, while other expressions oft refer to it, the "thousand years" is distinctly mentioned in but a single chapter. It is significant, however, that in that chapter it is mentioned not once, nor twice, nor even thrice, but four, five and six times. One great essential to the millennial period is the chaining of Satan, and we are told that the angel "laid hold on the dragon, the old serpent, that is the Devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years." Equally important to that millennial period is the lifting of deception from the minds of men, and we are told that the nations "shall be deceived no more until the thousand years shall be finished." The gracious promise to the risen, of association with Christ in places of power through the millennial period, is recorded in

this statement, "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection; over these the second death hath no power; but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years." Again, when the end of the millennium has been reached, it is described after this manner, "When the thousand years are finished, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison," etc. (Rev. 20:2, 3, 6, 7).

¶ If one insists that the promise of Isaiah, "Out of Zion shall come forth the law, and the word of Jehovah from Jerusalem" (2:3) refers to a time past and finds its sufficient fulfillment in the fact that the first church was organized in Jerusalem, and from that center the Gospel was proclaimed, he is immediately embarrassed by his inability to explain why the rest of that promise has so signally failed, for it is written, "He shall judge between the nations and shall decide concerning many peoples: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more" (v 4). No, it is rather the Prophet's vision of the triumph of the Kingdom of God yet to come in the earth—the peaceful and glorious era of the millennium.

¶ **The earthly supremacy is by the Son only.** The promise of the nations for "an inheritance and the uttermost parts of the earth for a possession" were made to the one of whom Jehovah said, "Thou art my Son" (Ps. 2:7, 9). "As in the days of old, Jehovah delighted in Solomon to set him on the throne of Israel," (Kings 10:9), so in the days to come, in answer to the request of Jesus, God will grant Him His heart's desire—the whole earth—not withholding the request of his lips, lay-

ing "honor and majesty upon Him," who is "the King of kings, the Lord of lords" (Ps. 21:2, 3, 5).

¶ **Finally, the heavenly supremacy is by the Father.** In discussing the "last things" Paul speaks of "Christ the first fruits; then they that are Christ's at his coming (beginning of the millennium). Then cometh the end (the end of the millennial age) when he shall deliver up the Kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have abolished all rule and all authority and power. For He (Christ) must reign, till He hath put all His enemies under His feet. But when He saith, "All things are put in subjection, it is evident that He is excepted who did subject all things unto Him, that God may be all in all" (1 Cor. 15:23-28). We agree with Nathaniel West that "The eternal state will differ as greatly from its previous form in the millennial state, as the millennial form will differ from our present form. * * * A painless, tearless, sorrowless state, the reproach taken from the Jew, the veil taken from the nations; and death swallowed up in victory; the Bridegroom rejoicing over His Bride; a festive Jubilee; Jehovah dwelling with His people—eternal splendors streaming everywhere" (West, "The Thousand Years," p. 14).

¶ With this also comports perfectly the teaching of Revelation. The twentieth chapter of that wonderful book begins the Millennium with the appearance of Jesus Christ and ends the Millennium with the judgment of the unrighteous dead and the doom of the devil. Then John saw a new heaven and a new earth—"The Holy City, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God," and " I heard a great voice out of the throne saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and

He shall dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God" (Rev. 21:2, 3, 4).

¶ Ah, then it is not only a Kingdom of God on earth in its process of rooting, and a Kingdom of God on earth in full flower, but also the Kingdom of God finding its final fruitage in heaven. In the root period—the Church on earth—the Third Person of the Trinity presides; it is distinctly the age of the Spirit (Acts 2:17-20). In the flowering period—the Kingdom of God on earth—the Son, or the Second Person in the Trinity, sits upon the throne, all power in heaven and in earth being given unto Him (Ps. 72:1-20). In the final period the Kingdom of God in Heaven, the Spirit and the Son yield into the hands of the Father their perfected work that "God may be all in all" (1 Cor. 15:28).

THE KINGDOM OF GOD—ITS LOCATION.

"VERILY I say unto you, There are some here of them that stand by, who shall in no wise taste death, till they see the Kingdom of God come with power."

¶ This is a proof text, popular alike with those students of the Word that say that the Kingdom of God is simply "His spiritual reign in the hearts of believers," and with those that maintain that the apostolic expectation of a literal return of the Lord was not more mistaken than the kindred hope of a literal kingdom to be established in the apostles' day. By the first it is used to show that the Kingdom could not have waited until the Lord's literal return for its establishment; and by the second, to prove the Judaizing influence that effected misconceptions of the Kingdom in the apostolic writers. The context, however, clearly indicates the exegetical blunder in both positions, for we immediately read, "After six days, Jesus taketh with him Peter, and James, and John, and bringeth them up into a high mountain apart by themselves; and He was transfigured before them; and His garments became glistening, exceeding white; so as no fuller on earth can whiten them. And there appeared unto them Elijah with Moses: and they were talking with Jesus. And Peter answered and said to Jesus: Rabbi, it is good for us to be here: and let us make three tabernacles; one for Thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elijah. For he knew not what to answer; for they became sore afraid. And there came a

cloud overwhelming them: and there came a voice out of the cloud, This is my beloved Son: hear ye Him. And suddenly looking round about, they saw no one any more, save Jesus only with themselves" (Mark 9:2-8).

¶ The divine plan seems almost universally to involve instruction by types and symbols. Great events are adumbrated by the appearance of a miniature of the same, and the millennial Kingdom is no exception to this rule of Scripture. The Kingdom in miniature was seen on the mount. "Moses and Elias, who appear with Christ in glory, prefigure respectively the risen and the changed saints translated and brought into one company at the appearing and Kingdom of our Lord; while the disciples who stand without the cloud and behold His glory are typical of those in the flesh, the Jews and the nations, who will still be left on the earth after the rapture of the saints." (See Gordon's "Ecce Venit," page 290.)

¶ That Kingdom, in miniature, Peter and others of them that stood by when Jesus uttered the first verse, beheld. It is of that Millennial Kingdom that we want to speak again. Dr. Clark, in his "Outline of Christian Theology" (page 433), says, concerning the millennium, "All the common discussions have for one of their fixed points this period (measured either literally or figuratively) of a thousand years, in which Christ is victorious on the earth. This period enters into all theories as an absolutely certain part, so important as to be the name-giving element. But when we seek to understand it better, it escapes us." All of Dr. Clark's statements, save the last sentence, may be accepted without discussion. On this, one must take issue with him or else admit that the Bible called "a Revelation," is yet "a Mystery." Believing that the purpose of that Holy Book is to reveal

the truth rather than to conceal the same, we contend that the truth of the Kingdom can be alike formulated and comprehended.

¶ It shall be our purpose in this chapter to discuss the location of the Kingdom. Keeping to the figure employed in the former discourse, we insist that the Kingdom is in embryo in the believer's heart: it will be in beauty over all the earth, while in full blessing it will be found in heaven.

In Embryo in the Believer's Heart.

¶ **The Church contains the seeds of the Kingdom.** In exposition of the parables of the Sower and the Wheat and the Tares, we called attention to the fact that the seeds of the Kingdom were saved souls. Some students of the Word may be troubled over the circumstance that Mark says, "The sower sowed the Word," and yet he is in agreement with Matthew, speaking of the individuals, "sown upon the rocky places" and "others that were sown among the thorns" and others that were "sown upon good ground." If one remember that man in his natural state is dead, and could only become a fertilized seed for the Kingdom when the Spirit quickened him with the Word, the difficulty vanishes. The Sower "of his own will, begat us with the word of truth" (James 1:18).

¶ When one studies the character of the four kinds of seeds sown to the end of producing the Kingdom of God, he will find that they are just such as now make up the Church of God—men and women that have heard the Word, and all of whom profess to have received it. But when they are sown into the world some of them prove fruitless because Satan hath taken away the Word that hath been sown in them; others of them fruitless

because of shallow natures, incapable of endurance against tribulation or persecution; and yet others unfruitful because the cares of the world, the deceitfulness of riches and the lust of other things, entering in, choke the Word; while a fourth company receive the Word unto a good harvest, and become fruit-bearing seed unto the Kingdom, destined to produce "thirty-fold; sixty-fold; a hundredfold."

¶ If any one say that because pre-millennialists predict a long season between the time of seed-sowing and the final harvest at the Kingdom, their opinions comport poorly with the Word, (which makes little reference to all the "ages which were to crowd each other between His ascension and His second coming,") our answer is, "The language of farming or fruit-growing is not commonly that of the growing process; but is that of seed-time and harvest." What man, speaking of next year's harvest, will spend any time in discussing the period in process of growth? What company of men, interested in agriculture, can congregate without talking of seed-time and harvest? And this is the language of Christ. So far as the Kingdom of God is concerned; the seed-time is now; but "the harvest is the end of the world" (Matt. 13:39).

¶ **The Church prepared for the coming of the Kingdom.** It may be conceded in advance, as we have already said, that the sacred writers used the two terms, **Basileia,** or Kingdom, and **Ecclesia,** or church, discriminatingly. If "the Church, which is the body of Christ" (Eph. 1:32), is made up of all those "baptized by one Spirit into it, whether they be Jews or Gentiles, bond or free" (1 Cor. 12:13), and the Kingdom is the institution by which and over which Christ is to reign at His coming, then believ-

ers, or the body of Christ, do well to pray as Christ instructed them, "Thy Kingdom come!" and the meaning of their language is clear when they add, "Thy will be done in earth as it is done in heaven."

¶ The discrimination between Church and Kingdom voices itself not alone in the matter of time—the one the institution of the present, and the other the institution of the future—but equally in terms and phrases. The New Testament declares the Church to have been founded by Christ, and the word employed (oikodomeo), though occurring more than a score of times in the New Testament, is never associated with the rise or "setting up" (anastasis) of the Kingdom; while in the New Testament references to the church the language of Scripture seldom describes a world-wide institution, but commonly a local body, "Then had the churches rest" (Acts 9:31), "The churches of Christ salute thee" (Rom. 16:16), "The churches of Asia" (1 Cor. 16:19), etc. But the Kingdom is invariably a unity. We know that men can get into the earthly church without regeneration, and that they go in now knowing no new birth, and we also know that no man will ever see the Kingdom of God except he be born anew (John 3:3). We know that the rich are much sought after by the churches, but it is as difficult for them to enter into the Kingdom of God as it is for a camel to go through the eye of a needle" (Mark 10:25). The Church was founded when the Spirit of God was poured out at Pentecost (Acts 2:1-11). The Kingdom of God will be "set up" in "the last days," and when He, who has gone to receive it, shall have returned (Luke 19:12). By application, one may be admitted to the literal church; and by regeneration to the spiritual; but "translation into the Kingdom of the Son of his love" is

to be the experience of the redeemed (Col. 1:13). Hence it is a fact that while both the literal and the spiritual church has a membership of "flesh and blood," "these cannot inherit the Kingdom of God" (1 Cor. 15:50).

¶ **The Church disappears on the arrival of the Kingdom.** By the apostolic writers the Church is always spoken of as a present thing, a something already "founded;" and the Kingdom commonly as something "yet to become" or "to be set up." Prof. H. Lummis, whose ability as a Greek scholar would not be disputed, says, "In the gospels 'entered into the Kingdom' is found ten times, half of them future, as shown by the tense of the verb, and the rest indefinite; not one case occurring in which any one is mentioned as having entered into the Kingdom of God."

¶ Does any one maintain that he can produce a passage which indicates that the Church will continue to exist and accomplish its work after the Kingdom of God has been "set up" in the earth? When one thinks of the mixed moral conditions that obtain now, and must forever remain regnant in the world so long as the Church (a small fraction of the race, much of it apostate, and according to prophecy, more of it to become so) is God's only institution in the world, he ought to be incited to pray devoutly, "Thy Kingdom come; thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven." When post-millennialists have paid their last tribute to the march of the Church toward the millennium, they are compelled by sober second thought to admit that the music of that march has in it a minor key; it sounds more like a funeral dirge than a victorious blast. Even R. F. Horton writes, "The sorrow of history is the comparative rareness of humanity

in it. It is as if humanity were only born by degrees. Those repulsive brute empires, Babylon, Macedon, though they relate to men, are they not intrinsically inhuman? Were they not secular illustrations of 'man's inhumanity to man?' Nay, even now, with the world before our eyes, can we pretend that any governments, outside the borders of Christianity are really human? Is the Turk human? Is the Chinese Mandarin human? Was Lobengula human? These are men, but they are not human? The ape and the tiger are stronger in them than the man. Our own government is partially human, because it is partially Christian. Some faint aroma (mark the words, "Some faint aroma") of mercy and justice and truth is in our throne rooms and state departments, because the Son of Man has passed through them." Who should grieve to let such an age pass; who is there—himself at once humane and Christian—compelled to believe that, improved as the present is over the older order of things, it may yet give place to what Horton himself describes as "the blessed actual reign of the Son of Man . . . where willing subjects love Him and express His will," and does not ardently long for the coming of that Kingdom! The thirteen colonies for a time attempted a government, and inasmuch as it was a step toward their utter independence of the Old World, it involved a decided progress; but Ridpath, in his "History," declares that "for three years after the treaty of peace, affairs were in a condition bordering on chaos. It was seen, unless the articles of federation could be replaced with a better system, the nation would go to ruin" (ch. 45, p. 358). But as God saw to it that that better system came, and the nation was saved, so God proposes to supplant the partially successful Church with a perfectly con-

quering Kingdom! As He succeeded in the wilderness experience, wherein His tried, tempted and perishing people, were led by the pillar of cloud and of fire—the symbol of the Spirit, by a complete conquering of Canaan, under Joshua, the type of our conquering Jesus, so shall the partially successful Church—the Spirit's work—be succeeded by the conquering Kingdom under the Son—Jehovah's Joshua!

In Beauty Over the Whole Earth.

¶ **The Savior is to reign over the whole earth.** The apocalypse of the Old Testament is Zechariah. The plan of the ages is there as certainly as in Revelation. Take each book at what it says, and again we have a fresh illustration of Gordon's fine phrase, "Prophecy is the mold of history." It was Zechariah that foresaw the Rider of the red horse; that foretold the success of Zion; that prophesied the chariots of the coming King; that pictured fasting captives turned into feasting conquerors; that delineated the last things or events incident to the end of this age; and he that told of how the Shepherd should be smitten and the sheep scattered, also predicted "the day of Jehovah when the feet of the Lord should stand upon the Mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east," and earthquakes and battles should precede the setting up of the Kingdom, "and the Lord should be King over all the earth" (14:9). I cannot quite believe that he, to whom so minute a vision was granted, that he beheld our Lord riding into Jerusalem upon a colt—the foal of an ass—seven hundred years before the event transpired, was mistaken when he saw Him ascending the throne of the entire earth in the end of the ages. What a blessed hour it will be! How

devoutly to be desired! Can we easily imagine what it would mean for all the nations of the earth to be under one sovereign; for petty jealousies between people to come to an end; for boundary disputes to be settled forever; for unjust restrictions in trade to be lifted; for oppression to pass; for wars to cease; for the Biblical doctrine, "we are all one blood," to be accepted, and brotherhood asserted? History tells how England was torn in the days of the barons, when castles sprang up everywhere, filled with armed men, each of them a robber hold, presided over by a petty tyrant. Green says, "They fought among themselves with deadly hatred; they spoiled the fairest land with fire and rapine; in what had been a most fertile country they destroyed almost all the provision of bread." Then he proceeds with a description of the tortuous methods, the mere reading of which makes one heartsick.

¶ What an improvement when that gave place to the government of a solitary soveign, and yet how faint a suggestion of that great transformation this world shall see, when "in the latter days it shall come to pass that the mountain of Jehovah's house shall be established on the top of the mountain, and out of Zion shall go forth the law and the word of Jehovah from Jerusalem; and He will judge between my peoples, and will decide concerning strong nations afar off; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more. But they shall sit every man under his vine and under his fig tree; for the mouth of Jehovah of hosts hath spoken it" (Micah 4:1-4).

¶ If one object that we have no right to insist upon a

literal acceptance of a part of the minor prophets without receiving all he says after the same manner, we consent, and ask, "What then?" If he answer, "Then, the same Zechariah will compel you to believe that after Christ has come and established His throne at Jerusalem, the Feast of the Tabernacles (Zech. 14:16), and other kindred material ordinances will be re-established, presenting the strange and incongruous circumstance "that the highest religious service and worship in the glorious and spiritual gospel era, should be in terms of the priesthood, sacrifices and feasts" (Goodspeed, p. 127), "a reversal of the progress of the ages from the material and sensuous into the more spiritual" (Goodspeed, p. 99). The reply is at hand! Does the maintenance of the ordinance of baptism detract from the spiritual truth symbolized thereby? "Buried therefore with Him, through baptism into death, through the glory of the Father, so we also might walk in newness of life" (Rom. 6:4). Does the maintenance of the physical ordinance of the Lord's Supper detract from the spiritual truth that His body was broken for us, and His blood poured out unto remission of sins? (Matt. 26:26-28). Might it not be, that with the symbolical ordinances of the Old Testament, reinstituted in the millennium, the Jews themselves would be put in a place of peculiar power, as evangelists, in presenting the perfect fulfillment of the Old Testament to be found in the Christ of the New? Is truth any the less spiritual when it becomes incarnate?

¶ Again, pre-millennialists are as ready to have the inspired writers spiritualize Scripture as they are unwilling to have the uninspired attempt the same. Peter, as Goodspeed himself says, "Writing to the elect of the dispensation, 'in sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedi-

ence and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ,' declares (1 Peter 2:5), 'Ye also as living stones are built up a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.' He continues in verse 9, 'But ye are an elect race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession.' Whether Peter is writing to Jewish or Gentile converts, the teaching is the same. Gathering up all that the Israelites had been, and still claimed to be, to God, Peter turns away from natural Israel to these scattered believers and declares them to be the antitype of God's ancient people: 'Ye are an elect race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession.' Ye do not possess a material temple, as did Israel, but ye constitute a temple, as ye 'as living stones are built up a spiritual house.' Ye, as 'a holy priesthood,' 'offer up spiritual sacrifices,' of which the old offerings will be but the material type. For Peter, the Jewish 'race,' 'nation,' 'priesthood,' 'people,' 'sacrifices,' 'temple,' had their higher and antitypical realization in believers," as Goodspeed confesses.

¶ To be sure, the whole question is hereby begged in the obliteration of the Biblical distinction between Jew and Gentile, everywhere evident in the Word. And yet if the claim of Goodspeed be conceded, it in no wise disproves the fact affirmed by Zechariah that the Lord is to be King over all the earth, but only illustrates the claim of pre-millennarians that "the elect church—glorified with the Lord, and the elect nation—Israel restored and converted" will take up together the work of universal redemption, and gives point to Gordon's question, "Have we pondered the deep suggestiveness of the apostle's saying, 'He hath raised us up together and enthroned

us together with Him in order that He might show forth to the ages which are coming, the exceeding riches of His grace in His goodness toward us in Christ Jesus." "That God in the future order of things, that is, in the Kingdom of God, which is the glory of the faithful, which is hidden here below, will be made visible to all—may manifest the overwhelming richness of His grace."

¶ **The saints are to possess all continents and islands.** The seed of the righteous "shall inherit the earth" (Psa. 25:13). "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth" (Matt. 5:5). The time of loyal subjection (every knee bowing in recognition of His authority, and every tongue confessing to His praise) will also be the period of righteous administration of government. The wise men wrote, "When the righteous are increased (are in authority) the people rejoice." The authority of the future will be jointly exercised by Jesus Christ and his most faithful servants (Rev. 19:17). You will remember that John, in his apocalyptic vision, makes the new song heard in heaven to be one of joy over the fact that Christ's death did "purchase unto God, with blood, men of every tribe and tongue, and people and nation, and made them to be unto our God a Kingdom, and priests; and they reign upon the earth" (Rev. 5:9-10). Dr. Chalmers tells us that in 1858 some people were digging in France and they found eight costly crowns, all lying close together, having been lost, or hidden away in the earth. Four of them were very costly and beautiful, while the others were smaller. The first four were for the king and queen, and the prince, and the second oldest child. The other four crowns were for the younger children of the king's household. And so, when Christ shall be crowned Lord of earth, even his little children shall share in the glory,

"for when the chief Shepherd shall appear, we shall receive crowns of glory that fade not away!"

¶ **The whole earth is to be renewed in righteousness.** One cannot read the Word through without feeling that in addition to the spiritual supremacy that is to be the glory of this personal reign, there is also a physical renewal for the face of the earth. If in consequence of sin, the ground was cursed with thorns and briars (Gen. 3:17-18), it is natural that when redemption is complete, "instead of the thorn shall come up the fir tree; and instead of the briar shall come up the myrtle tree." "The desert shall rejoice and blossom like the rose." The scenes of carnage shall give place to the strange vision of the lion and the lamb lying peacefully together, for we, according to His promise, look for "a new heaven and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness."

In Full Blessing in Heaven.

¶ **There all rebellion will be at an end.** It is alike evident, from 1 Cor. 15:25-28 and Rev. 20:7-10, that the millennial period will know some rebels against the divine will; but that "the Kingdom of heaven" is to be freed from all such is equally clear from 1 Cor. 15:28 and Rev. 21:8 and 27. "Jehovah hath established His throne in the heavens, and His Kingdom ruleth over all" (Psa. 103:19).

¶ There all blessings will be experienced. Men shall receive in heaven their "great rewards" (Matt. 5:12); men shall find in heaven their "treasures" (John 10:21), the most felicitous companionship is promised for heaven, "Many shall come from the East and from the West and shall sit down with Abraham, etc., in the Kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 8:11).

"When shall I reach that happy place,
And be forever blest?
When shall I see my Father's face,
And in his bosom rest?"

¶ There perfect joy will find expression. One of the hallelujahs that John heard being rendered in heaven found voice in these words, "Salvation unto God, who sitteth on the throne, and unto the Lamb." It will be remembered that Handel, when he wrote the Hallelujah chorus, had a vision of all heaven before him, "and of the great God himself." And, one that reads the twenty-first chapter of Revelation must be impressed with the fact that from the time when Jesus delivers over the Kingdom to God, the Father (v. 3), sorrow is no more (v. 5), and joy is unconfined.

"We speak of the realms of the blest,
That country so bright and so fair;
And oft are its glories confessed;
But what must it be to be there?

"We speak of its pathways of gold,
Its walls decked with jewels so rare,
Its wonders and pleasures untold;
But what must it be to be there?

"We speak of its freedom from sin,
From sorrow, temptation and care,
From trials without and within;
But what must it be to be there?"

THE KINGDOM OF GOD—ITS CITIZENSHIP.

THE citizenship of the Kingdom is not sufficiently defined in any one solitary passage of the Word. The elements involved are too many, and the subjects concerned too varied, to find full expression in either a verse or a chapter, or even a book. This custom of the Spirit, in inspiration, compels the comparison of Scripture with Scripture in the making clear of any great and important truth.

¶ The wisdom of this divine method is easily apparent to the good student. Being compelled to search the sacred pages for any single subject, one gains rich stores of information upon other themes while following his peculiar interest to its biblical end. The man that makes himself thoroughly familiar with the general theme of the Kingdom of God will have been compelled to go from Genesis to Revelation, and to walk again and again through the green pastures and beside the still waters of almost every one of the sixty-six sections of God's great Word. How interesting the search for "the definition of the Kingdom"; how stimulating the study of "the evolution of the Kingdom"; how delightful the survey in determining "the location of the Kingdom;" but with more keen interest still must men inquire after "the citizenship of the Kingdom," since its understanding determines one's personal relationship to the Kingdom itself.

¶ Having in the previous chapters maintained that the coming Kingdom is real and literal, as well as ideal and spiritual, we now invite attention to real citizens, and to literal citizenship in the Kingdom of God.

Its Sovereign Citizen.

¶ Its sovereign Citizen is Jesus Christ. He is "of heaven" (1 Cor. 15:47); He was born "king of the Jews" (Matt. 2:2); to Him the supremacy of the earth—"dominion from sea to sea" (Ps. 72-8)—has been promised. The Kingdom to be "set up" at the second advent is distinctly described as "His Kingdom" (2 Tim. 4:1). Christ Himself said: "The Son of man shall send forth His angels, and they shall gather out of **His Kingdom** all things that cause stumbling, and them that do iniquity" (Matt. 13-41). In Luke 22:30 He describes it as "my Kingdom"; while the Apostle Peter encouraged his brethren to give the more diligence to make their calling and election sure that there might richly be supplied unto them "the entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ" (2 Pet. 1:11).

¶ **He originated the Kingdom.** Other kingdoms grew up; this Kingdom is "set up" of God (Dan. 2:44). In the judgment, described in Matthew 25:34, Christ Himself declares concerning "the Kingdom" that it had been prepared for His own "from the foundation of the world." If then "all things were made through Him; and without Him was not anything made that hath been made" (John 1:3), the Kingdom of God is no exception. Paul, in his epistle to the Hebrews, declares concerning the Son—"appointed heir of all things" (1:2)—that He is the One through whom also God "made the ages" or dispensations, and, of the Son, God said, "Thy throne is

for ever and ever" (v. 8); and to the Son, whom He had exalted beyond the angels, is His combined appointment and promise, "Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies the footstool of thy feet" (v. 13). It is little wonder that the psalmist, anticipating the Kingdom, should say, "The Kingdom is Jehovah's (or the Lord's): and He is the ruler over the nations" (22-28).

¶ **He rules in the Kingdom.** It would hardly seem necessary to further emphasize this fact in view of what has already been presented. The clear declarations of Daniel; of Isaiah 9:6-7, of Jeremiah 33:21, of Psalms 2d and 72d, of Zechariah 9:10, and 14:9, and scores of other Old and New Testament Scriptures addressed to this theme put it past dispute. There is no question that He rules in the Kingdom; the only point of dispute is whether the Kingdom be real or ideal. Some have seemed to feel that if Christ was ever to appear in person in the world, that He would be located in that circumstance, and, consequently, limited! But, let it be remembered that all wisdom is with Him! Since He needed not to be present, in person, to know when His friend was dead, nor yet present in person to speak the word that should heal the sick, His omniscience would make possible His perfect and righteous administration if He remained in Jerusalem for a thousand years! When we recall the circumstance that, in His risen body, He appeared when He pleased, hindered in His movements by no distance, retarded by no obstacle, excluded by no walls, who can successfully dispute His ability to be present in any part of the earth at any moment when righteous government might demand special administration? On an occasion of defeat, Napoleon petulantly said, "I cannot be everywhere!" But who will attempt

to so limit Christ whether he speaks of His bodily or His spiritual presence? In the days of the Rebellion, by forced marches, confederates were often surprised and scattered; but in the days of Christ on the throne, forced marches will not be a necessity, since the most secret plot would be by Him as clearly anticipated as was the fainting crowd that came out to arrest Him.

¶ **He receives all homage.** It is in vain for men to argue that because Christ is to be in civil command of all the earth, that His government will be that of authority versus affection. Opposition shall be broken as with a rod of iron (Ps. 2:9). Enemies shall feel the tread of His conquering feet (1 Cor. 15:25); but He that shall reign in righteousness shall also administer in love, "Wherefore also God highly exalted Him, and gave unto Him the name which is above every name; that in the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of **things** in heaven and **things** on earth and **things** under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (Phil. 2:9-11). His reign is everywhere described as a reign of peace as well as of righteousness; and of prosperity as well as of conquest; and if He brake in pieces the oppressor, "He shall judge thy people with righteousness, and thy poor with judgment. The mountains shall bring peace to the people, and the hills, in righteousness. He shall come down like rain upon the mown grass: as showers that water the earth. In His days shall the righteous flourish" (Ps. 72:2-7). If "His enemies" are compelled "to lick the dust," the kings of Tarshish and of the isles shall bring presents: the kings of Sheba and Seba shall offer gifts Yea, all kings shall fall down before Him: all nations shall serve Him. For He shall deliver the needy when

He crieth; and the poor, that hath no helper. He shall have pity on the poor and needy, and the souls of the needy He shall save. He shall redeem their soul from oppression and violence; and precious shall their blood be in His sight: . . . and men shall pray for Him continually; they shall bless Him all the day long. There shall be abundance of grain in the earth upon the top of the mountains; the fruit thereof shall shake like Lebanon: and they of the city shall flourish like grass of the earth. His name shall endure forever; His name shall be continued as long as the sun: and men shall be blessed in Him; all nations shall call Him happy. Blessed be Jehovah God, the God of Israel, who only doeth wondrous things" (Ps. 72:9-19).

"Kingdom of Peace, whose music clear
Swept through Judea's starlit skies,
Still the harsh sounds of human strife
Break on the heavenly harmonies.
Yet shall thy song of triumph ring
In full accord, from land to land,
And men with angels learn to sing:
'Behold, the Kingdom is at hand!'"

Its Most Honored Citizens.

¶ **Its most honored citizens are the Translation saints.** When "the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God, the dead in Christ shall rise first. Then we that are alive, that are left, shall, together with them, be caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air" (1 Thes. 4:16-17). The glorious changes accomplished for these translation saints, Paul fully explains in his epistle to the Corinthians. "Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God. Behold, I tell you a mystery: we shall not all sleep, but

we shall be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality" (1 Cor. 15:50-53). Aside from the circumstance that they shall be the first to behold the face of the King, there are three respects in which these saints are specially honored.

¶ **They shall be saved from the surpassing tribulation.** It will be remembered that the tribulation of all tribulations immediately precedes the coming of the King. It is the sign that the same is nigh. It seems to be fairly clear that Christ is to come into the first heavens for His saints before He comes to the earth with them to establish His throne. The first appearance is as sudden as a thief in the night. It separates the men in the field, one is taken and one is left; the women at the mill, one is taken and one is left (Matt. 24:40-41). It occurs when the inhabitants of earth are engaged in indifferent revelry akin to that which characterized the eating, drinking and marrying immediately preceding Noah's entrance into the ark (Matt. 24:38). The second appearance is as evident as the lightning that "cometh forth from the east and is seen even unto the west," and it will find a world in the throes of tribulation, "such as hath not been from the beginning of the world until now; no, nor ever shall be. And except those days had been shortened, no flesh would have been saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened" (Matt. 24:21-22).

¶ If one turn to the twelfth chapter of Revelation he will find that the converts are to be driven into the wilderness for a thousand two hundred and three score days, or three years and a half, at the beginning of which time

there is to be war in heaven, Michael and his angels against the dragon. "And the great dragon was cast down, the old serpent—he that is called the devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world; he was cast down to the earth and his angels were cast down with him." And John heard a great voice in heaven saying, "Now is come the salvation, and the power, **and the Kingdom of our God, and the authority of His Christ**: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, that accuseth them before our God day and night." "Woe for the earth and for the sea: because the devil is gone down unto you, having great wrath, knowing that he hath but a short time. And when the dragon saw that he was cast down to the earth, he persecuted the woman who brought forth the man child," and drives her into the wilderness, where for "a time and times and half a time" (or three years and a half) she is nourished from the face of the serpent. And the wrath of the serpent is described as waxing greater, and he makes war with the rest of the woman's seed that keep the commandments of God and hold the testimony of Jesus.

¶ By a careful study of the supremacy of the Anti-Christ it will be seen again how the saints must suffer at his bloody hands. It is a significant fact, however, that there is no hint of such suffering for those that come out of their graves at the call of Jesus; or those, that, being changed from mortals to immortals, are caught up "together with them"! On the contrary, in his epistle to the church of Philadelphia, Jesus says of certain favored ones, "Because thou didst keep the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of trial, that hour that is to come upon the whole world, to try them that dwell upon the earth." He also said, of them that

should be "counted worthy" to obtain to the resurrection from the dead, "they are equal unto the angels; and are sons of God, being sons of the resurrection" (Luke 20:36). Such could not suffer!

¶ **They shall be His companions in the crowning celebration.** Evidently there is a great event to be celebrated in the heavens when risen saints, having been changed from the corruptible to the incorruptible and living believers having been transformed from mortals to immortals, are "together caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air." It is commonly accepted that that is the time when the Lord shall receive unto Himself His bride, the Lamb's wife. The parable of the wise and foolish virgins would seem to add emphasis to the opinion, since those who were ready and watching, at His sudden and unexpected appearance, "went in with Him to the marriage feast" (Matt. 25:20). It will be a blessed hour in the course of the eternal ages; and happy are those that shall be privileged a part in it.

It may be at morn, when the day is awaking,
When sunlight through darkness and shadow is breaking,
That Jesus will come in the fullness of glory,
To receive from the world "His own."

It may be at midday, it may be at twilight,
It may be, perchance, that the blackness of midnight
Will burst into light in the blaze of His glory,
When Jesus receives "His own."

While its hosts cry Hosanna, from heaven descending,
With glorified saints and the angels attending,
With grace on His brow, like a halo of glory,
Will Jesus receive "His own."

Oh, joy! oh, delight! should we go without dying,
No sickness, no sadness, no dread and no crying,
Caught up thro' the clouds with our Lord unto glory,
When Jesus receives "His own."

O, Lord Jesus, how long? How long,
Ere we shout the glad song?
Christ returneth;
Hallelujah! Hallelujah, Amen.
Hallelujah! Amen.

¶ **They shall be His associates in the coming administration.** Of certain it is written, "They lived and reigned with Christ a thosand years." Before John had been vouchsafed his apocalyptic vision Jesus had already declared, "Verily, I say unto you, that ye which have followed me in the regeneration, when the Son of Man shall sit on the throne of His glory ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel." The word might easily refer not alone to the birth of the Spirit, but to that other change that makes men, that were once dead, to live again; or that were mortal to become immortal.

¶ It will be remembered that when Napoleon, at the early age of thirty-three, was proclaimed consul for life, and two years later was decreed Emperor of the French with the succession hereditary in his family, he crowned himself in the presence of the Pope in Notre Dame. A little later, he was crowned by others in Milan, taking the title of King of Italy. Establishing a court of imperial splendor at Paris he made the members of his house princes and kings. Jerome became king of Westphalia; Louis of Holland; Joseph of Naples and Sicily; his generals he made marshals of France. So the Son of Man takes the throne as His right; but at the same time is ac-

corded it by the common consent of angels and men; and, once in the place of power, His own are in the line of appointment, for they "shall have authority over cities." The apostolic band-pre-eminent, the martyr-company occupying scarcely less important places, while such other saints and believers as were most faithful in service in the time of His absence, shall come to places of power in the day of His presence.

Its Natural Citizens.

¶ Its natural citizens are Israelites.

¶ **They are the original children of God's Kingdom.** Israel was the earth's first theocracy. The plans and purposes of that theocrary were alike voiced in connection with the call of Abraham. "I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; in thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed" (Gen. 12:2-3).

¶ When the descendants of Abraham became both numerous and prosperous, pride took possession of their hearts, and at Ramah they came to Samuel demanding, "Make us a king to judge us like all the nations." And Samuel, in his disappointment, prayed unto Jehovah, "And Jehovah said unto Samuel, Hearken unto the voice of the people in all that they say unto thee, for they have not rejected thee; but they have rejected me that I should not be King over them." In the selection of Saul the theocracy was eclipsed, but God's plans can never be permanently thwarted. In the choice of David, He put His own man on the throne, and by His promises to him, revealed the way to a recovered theocracy. To David He said, "When thy days be fulfilled, and thou shalt

sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy seed after thee, who shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build a house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever" (2 Sam. 7:12-13). Of this, the Psalmist sings, "I have made a covenant with my chosen, I have sworn unto David my servant; Thy seed will I establish forever, and build up thy throne to all generations" (89:3-4). When, therefore, Jesus was about to be born, it was said, "He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Most High: and the Lord God shall give unto Him the throne of his father David: and He shall reign over the house of Jacob forever; and of His Kingdom there shall be no end" (Luke 1:32-33). "Jehovah hath chosen Jacob unto Himself and Israel for His own possession" (Ps. 135:4). In Matt. 8-12 Jesus speaks of faithless Israelites as "the sons of the Kingdom." In the same gospel, having described them by the parable of the wicked husbandman, He declares, "The Kingdom of God shall be taken away from you, and shall be given unto a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof" (21:43).

¶ That this is only a temporary loss of their relation to the Kingdom, Paul makes evident when writing to the Romans. He says, "I would not, brethren, have you ignorant of this mystery, lest ye be wise in your own conceits, that a hardening in part hath befallen Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in; and so all Israel be saved: even as it was written, There shall come out of Zion the Deliverer; He shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob: and this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins" (11:25-28). In truth, this whole chapter from the pen of the Apostle Paul is written to answer the question, "Did God cast off His peo-

ple?" And the answer is, "God did not cast off His people that He foreknew." The argument is that if the Gentile church was come out of that "which is by nature a wild olive tree, and wast grafted, contrary to nature, into a good olive tree: how much more shall these, which are the **natural branches,** be grafted into their own olive tree" (v. 24).

¶ **Concerning the Kingdom, the Jews are heirs of special promise.** If one deny that the promise in the Pentateuch of the favored land for this people has aught to do with the Kingdom, one can hardly maintain the same attitude concerning the poetical and prophetical books of the Old Testament. The Psalmist, anticipating the time of restitution, says, "O clap your hands, all ye peoples; shout unto God with the voice of triumph. For Jehovah Most High is terrible; he is a great King over all the earth. He shall subdue the people under us, and the nations under our feet. He shall choose our inheritance for us, the glory of Jacob whom He loved" (47:1-4). And again, "Once have I sworn by my holiness; I will not lie unto David; His seed shall endure forever, and his throne as the sun before me. It shall be established forever as the moon, and as the faithful witness in the sky (89:35-37). Isaiah also writes of Israel, "Whereas thou hast been forsaken and hated, so that no man passed through thee, I will make thee an eternal excellency, a joy of many generations. Thou shalt also suck the milk of nations, and shalt suck the breast of kings; and thou shalt know that I, Jehovah, am thy Savior, and thy Redeemer, the Mighty One of Jacob" (60:15-16). Ezekiel is more explicit still, "Thus saith the Lord Jehovah, Behold, I will take the children of Israel from among the nations, whither they are gone, and will gather them on

every side, and bring them into their own land: and I will make them one nation in the land, upon the mountains of Israel; and one king shall be king to them all; and they shall be no more two nations, neither shall they be divided into two kingdoms any more at all: neither shall they defile themselves any more with their idols, nor with their detestable things, nor with any of their transgressions: but I will save them out of all their dwelling places, wherein they have sinned, and will cleanse them; so shall they be my people, and I will be their God. And my servant David shall be king over them; and they all shall have one shepherd: they shall also walk in my judgments, and observe my statutes, and do them. And they shall dwell in the land that I have given unto Jacob my servant, wherein your fathers dwelt; and they shall dwell therein, they, and their children, and their children's children, forever: and David my servant shall be their prince forever" (37:21-25). Dr. West remarks that "he who studies Paul will find him teaching the same truth when discussing 'the Jewish problem,' as men call it. In Rom. 10:6-10, 11:25-29, he puts Israel's conversion as a people, even as Isaiah does (Isa. 59:16-21), and as Peter does (Acts 3:19-21), at the second coming of Christ."

¶ Luke tells us that after the church is gathered, Israel's restoration is to occur, and in these words, "Simeon hath rehearsed how first God did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for His name. And to this agree the words of the prophets: as it is written, After these things, **I WILL RETURN,** and I will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen; and I will set it up: that the residue of men may seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles, upon whom my name is called, saith the

Lord, who maketh these things known from of old" (Acts 15:16-18).

¶ We never think of promises of dispersion of Israel but we are greatly enheartened concerning the recovery of this ancient people. You are familiar with the Jewish legend that represents two venerable Rabbis as walking among the ruins of Jerusalem after its destruction, with such meditation as might naturally characterize the truest of patriots, as they studied the desolation of their capitol city. One is reported to have given way to unrestrained tears as he mourns, "Alas! alas! This is the end of all. Our beautiful city is no more. Our temple is laid waste; our brethren are driven away into captivity." The other, with a greater knowledge, replies, "True; but let us learn from the verity of God's judgments we behold about us, the certainty of His mercies. He hath said, "I will destroy Jerusalem,' and we see He hath done it; but hath He not also said, 'I will rebuild Jerusalem,' and shall we not believe Him?" His promise concerning the capital city, whether in its desolation or in its restitution, can hardly be more sure than His covenant to Israel concerning their loss of the Kingdom, but their final recovery of the same. We have seen the first in the outworkings of the divine plan; we shall behold the second: "the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it."

Its Adopted Citizens.

¶ **The adopted citizens of the Kingdom of God are the regenterate Gentiles.** They have been made heirs by adoption. Paul writes to the Ephesians, "Wherefore, remember, that beforetime ye, the Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called Circumcision, in the flesh, made by hands; that ye were

at that time separated from Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of the promise, having no hope and without God in the world. But now, in Christ Jesus, ye that once were far off are made nigh in the blood of Christ. For He is our peace, who made both one, and brake down the middle wall of partition, having abolished in His flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; that He might create in Himself of twain one new man, so making peace, and might reconcile them both in one body unto God through the cross, having slain the enmity thereby; and He came and preached peace to you that were far off, and peace to them that were nigh: for through Him we both have our access in one Spirit unto the Father. So then ye are no more strangers and sojourners, but ye are fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God" (Eph. 2:11-19).

¶ In writing to the Romans Paul describes the process by which Gentiles come into this great grace, as an adoption, saying, "Ye receive not the spirit of adoption again unto fear; but ye receive the spirit of adoption, whereby ye cry Abba, Father." Abbott, in his "Biography of Napoleon," recites how, after the battle of Austerlitz, the great general immediately adopted all the children of those soldiers that had fallen. They were supported by the state. They all, as the children of the emperor, were permitted to attach the name of Napoleon to their own. Our great God hath done more gloriously—He hath adopted the children of those who died fighting against Him, and the descendants of rebels against His government, and permitted them to wear His name, calling them "children of God: and if children, then

heirs; heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ" (Rom. 8:16-17).

¶ **By His grace they have been made Israel's equals.** Paul writes to the Ephesian Christians, concerning "the mystery of Christ which in other generations was not made known unto the sons of men, as it hath now been revealed unto His holy apostles and prophets in the Spirit; to wit, that the Gentiles are fellow-heirs, and fellow-members of the body, and fellow-partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel" (3:3-6). So "there can be neither Jew nor Greek; . . . if ye are Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed; heirs according to promise" (Gal. 3:28-29), "God having provided some better thing concerning us, that apart from us they should not be made perfect" (Heb. 11:40).

¶ **By grace, Gentile opponents become God's patriots.** "God commendeth His own love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners Christ died for us." It was of Gentiles that Paul wrote, "Your obedience is come abroad unto all men. I rejoice therefore over you" (Rom. 16:19). Unquestionably the most glorious republic of ancient times was that of Rome, citizenship in which was prized so highly that even Paul boasted it for himself. Her policy was a generous one. Whom she conquered she killed not, but adopted; and, in many instances these ingrafted sons rewarded her mercy by the most meritorious service. So much so that Gibbon declares that among them were some of the noblest ornaments. Virgil was a native of Mantua; Horace was inclined to doubt whether he should call himself an Apulian or a Lucanian; the patriotic family of the Catos emerged from Tusculum; and the little town of Arpinum claimed the double honor of producing Marius and Cicero, the former

of whom deserved, after Romulus and Camillus, to be styled the third founder of Rome; and the latter, after saving his country from the designs of Catiline, enabled her to contend with Athens for the place of eloquence. So also Gentiles, aliens, conquered and adopted, play a conspicuous part in the services of Him to whom the Kingdom belongs, and in the interests of the Kingdom itself.

¶ **Its alien citizens.** It is an interesting thing to see that almost every parable of the Kingdom presents alien citizens. If it be the Kingdom in embryo, there are the tares which belong not to it either by generation or adoption; if it be the parable of the net, there are the bad fish that must be cast away. We are told, "So shall it be in the end of the world, the angels shall come forth and sever the wicked from among the righteous." In the parable of the talents the alien citizen is dismissed to "outer darkness." In the parable of the sheep and goats, aliens "go away into eternal punishment." In the millennium of Revelations 20, aliens follow Satan in his last attack upon the Kingdom and the camp of the saints, and share his fate in the pit. When Christ Himself referred to them He declared that they shall be gathered out of His Kingdom by His holy angels.

¶ Campbell Morgan, commenting upon this, says, "I believe that the new era in the world's history will be ushered in first of all by this strange and marvelous and overwhelming angel visitation, angel discrimination, and angel separation. Angel discrimination means heaven's standards set up among the affairs of men. Angel separation means heaven's might enforcing heaven's standards"; and, later, he adds, "I sigh for the coming of the angels. I feel increasingly that the government of men is a disas-

trous failure, and will be to the end. Presently when the church is complete, and lifted out, angels will take this business in hand, and there will be no seducer clever enough to dodge an angel, and there will be no scamp master enough of traffic to escape the grip of an angel hand. . . . Buildings will crash at their touch, and unholy places will be demolished at their bidding; and yet the angels are only the King's messengers. Think of the King Himself behind it all, coming to establish His Kingdom. This is an unbelieving age, a very clever, busy one; but a very small age in its thinking. I love to get back from magazine articles and philosophies to my Bible, and I love to hear Him say, 'The Son of Man shall send forth His angels, and they shall gather out of His Kingdom all things that cause stumbling,' everything that offends. That is my hope today. Oh, my hope is not in any missionary society in existence, nor in any evangelistic society in existence. I pray that they may do their duty, preach the gospel, and hasten the coming day; but my hope is in these flaming seraphs; my heart cries out for their coming." And the reason Morgan assigns is this—when they have done their work, "The things that remain shall be the basis of the new Kingdom, and the rule of the iron rod shall be established; and then Africa will get her great chance, and China too. When the angel guards China against any man's daring to suggest opium, then is the chance for China." That is only one passing illustration, but we catch the thought!

THE RETURN, THE RESURRECTION AND THE RAPTURE.

THESE three great words deserve each a separate and extended discussion. The only reasons, therefore, for trying to bring them within the limits of a single chapter exist in two circumstances. First, the discussion of the Kingdom, through which we have just passed, has involved very many of the features of both the Return and the Resurrection; and secondly, Paul, by the pen of inspiration, links these all together in both logical and doctrinal order. With that marvelous brevity which is the soul of inspiration, he presents them in five short verses: "But we would not have you ignorant, brethren, concerning them that fall asleep; that ye sorrow not, even as the rest, who have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also that are fallen asleep in Jesus will God bring with him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we that are alive, that are left unto the coming of the Lord, shall in no wise precede them that are fallen asleep. For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven, with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first; then we that are alive, that are left, shall together with them be caught up in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air:and so shall we ever be with the Lord" (1 Thes. 4:13-17).

¶ This inspired statement is to the whole subject of

the Return, the Resurrection, and the Rapture, what the architect's preliminary sketch is to the finished structure. In each instance it remains for the workers to fill in, and to fill up. A good student will, in a Spirit-led research of the Word, find material at hand for the completion of the great doctrines that Paul here briefly, yet boldly outlines. As the stones wrought into the temple of God were each ready for its place, requiring not the touch of the hammer, but rather, a perfect knowledge of the plans and careful placing, so the man who works on these great doctrines, with Paul's plan before him, will find no need to change, carve, or unnaturally constrain the sacred sentences of Scripture. When properly put together, they give perfect proof of the divine plan, and provide an unanswerable argument for premillennarianism. Men have sometimes sought to set Peter, or Paul, or John against Jesus; but on this subject it will be seen that inspired servants and divine Lord speak together.

¶ In the presentation of these great themes to the Thessalonians, Paul speaks of the Second Coming, the First Resurrection, and the Supreme Rapture.

The Second Coming.

¶ **It is to be both literal and personal.** To speak of the Lord's return as a mere figure of speech that is to know no literal fulfilment, is little less sacrilegious than the total denial of inspiration. To identify that return with the coming of the Holy Spirit, or with the experience of death, is to despise the Master's own differentiations. He was extremely careful to distinguish between the office of the Son and that of the Spirit. The Son was manifested in the flesh—"The Word became flesh and dwelt among us" (John 1:14); the Spirit was contrasted

with the flesh—"That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit" (John 3:6). The Son's office was that of sacrifice and substitution—"The good shepherd layeth down his life for the sheep" (John 10:11); the Spirit's office was that of illumination—instruction—"But the Comforter, even the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, He shall teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said unto you" (John 14:26). The Son's personal absence from the earth He declared to be a necessity to the Spirit's appearance in the Church—"It is expedient for you that I go away; for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I go, I will send Him unto you" (John 16:7).

¶ If the plain references to the return of the Lord do not involve a personal coming, language has lost its meaning. For the comfort of His disciples, sorrowing over His approaching departure, He said, "If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again." In the same discourse He said, "I will not leave you desolate: I will come unto you." The angels that attended Him in the ascension said to the anxious onlookers, "Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye looking into heaven? This Jesus, who was received up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye beheld Him going into heaven" (Acts 1:11).

¶ It is little wonder, then that Paul, writting to the Thessalonians, employs the phrase, "The Lord Himself shall descend from heaven, with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God." There is not a hint in Scripture that the Lord is ever to be identified with death—which the Bible denominates an "enemy" to be eventually "destroyed" (1 Cor. 15:26). This

attempt is, as Ottman suggests, a shift, by which some have sought to blunt the keen edge of Scripture. That Christ is representatively present in the world by the Spirit, no man disputes; but that there is another coming "for which we look," a revelation of His presence, which "every eye shall see" is the contention of the Book. Our hymnology—than which no truer theology has ever been written—sets that hope to sweetest harmony; and yet to tear the expectation of a personal return out of your best hymn book would not leave it in such tatters as would be that more blessed Book—the Bible—when you had torn the same from its sacred pages.

¶ **The time is indefinite; the event, imminent.** "Of that day and hour knoweth no one, not even the angels of heaven, neither the Son, but the Father only." But, "Be ye ready; for in an hour that ye think not the Son of Man cometh." It is little wonder that Paul—perfectly familiar with his Lord's speech—should have written to Titus, concerning the grace of God, which had appeared, bringing salvation to all, "instructing us, to the intent that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly and righteously and godly in this present world; looking for the blessed hope and appearing of the glory of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ" (Titus 2:12-13).

¶ The wisdom of making this great event imminent, and the date of it indefinite, exists in the fact suggested by Baines, namely, that disciples were to be so living in the hope of it, that they would not be surprised if it occurred, while not so confidently dating it as to suffer disappointment in its delay. The argument that this event could not be "at hand" nearly two thousand years ago, and yet, so remote as time has proven it to have been, ignores

alike the difference between man's and God's computation of time, and the transcendency of the event. If, with God, "a thousand years are as a watch in the night when it is passed," we see no difficulty in the Spirit's expression, "the time is at hand."

¶ Again, the proportions of this event are such as to make that language not only permissible, but accurate. In the far West a carload of passengers were excited by the announcement, "We are coming to Shasta; look!" Windows were pushed up, men and women put out their heads, to behold that snow-capped peak, full before them. And yet, as one put it, "I rode on and on, from a little after break of day until high noon, and still we had not reached its base; and when the Western sun had dipped far toward the horizon, glancing backward, we beheld its bold, beautiful peak, glorious with the vesture of the sun." You could not have said that of a hill. A hill a mile away is not at hand; but one hundred and fifty miles away, and Shasta is "at hand." The second appearance of Jesus, as compared with the most important of human events, is so splendidly transcendent that no wonder those seers, realizing something of its mighty significance, should have lost the sense of distance and time, and exclaimed, "The day of the Lord draweth nigh!" or else, speaking for that Spirit who does not measure time by minutes and hours, but rather as it relates itself to eternity, say, "The Lord is at hand" (Phil. 4:15).

¶ **His coming will perfectly accord with prophecy.** For some time there has been a discussion in the pre-millennarian ranks as to whether the "any moment" theory of the second appearance could be retained; one school contending that that is a necessity of the interpretation of

Scripture, and another that we can certainly recognize the fulfillment of prophecy, and that some portions of this, not having occurred already, must come to pass before we see in the heavens the "sign of the Son of Man." This problem finds its solution in the very fact that the last letter of prophecy, named as preliminary to the Lord's appearance, may have its perfect fulfillment, and yet the most of professed Christian men fail so to mark the movements of time as to clearly recognize the perfecting of the divine plan. When Jesus appeared the first time, how few there were that saw in the Babe of Bethlehem the completion of prophecy! The visit of the star-led men from the East and the inquiry of the song-surprised shepherds seem to have found an answer in the faith of Simeon and Anna and in the fears of the criminal Herod, but to have left unmoved multitudes of men that were supposed to be the great Scripture students of the day.

¶ Again, the certainty of a lapse of time between the coming of Christ for His people and His coming to the earth with them, cannot be disposed of by dubbing it "a theory created to meet a difficulty of the premillennarian view." In a previous chapter we have already seen that there are two comings described in the twenty-fourth of Matthew that are so absolutely unlike as to demand an explanation. That explanation is found in the fact that Christ comes for his saints (1 Thes. 4:16, 17, and 2 Thes. 2:1); an appearance which is apart from "the coming of our Lord Jesus with all His saints" (1 Thes. 3:13). to take His throne and "judge the world in righteousness"; and, to this period the Tribulation seems unquestionably assigned. The conversion of the Jew is at its close, and the "wars and rumors of wars, earthquakes,

convulsions of nature," etc. both naturally and scripturally belong to the same time!

¶ The full proof of these assertions we postpone to the discussion of the tribulation and the translation. But for the present, let the Word of the Lord Jesus instruct us, "For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass away from the law, till all things be accomplished" (Matt. 5:18). Dr. Arthur Pierson tells us that in 1884, when the transit of Venus was occurring, some German scientists, at Aiken, S. C., had drawn an elliptical circle upon a great stone, from which they made their observations. Later, they presented a request to the city that this stone might remain undisturbed until one hundred and twenty years had passed and another transit of Venus had occurred, at which times the then-living scientists might make their observations and compare them with the work of 1884. Pierson reminds us that 120 years is a long time; every throne will have been emptied of occupant after occupant, and the map of the world will have been made over; for aught we know the march of the millennium may have begun, but prompt to the day, the hour, the minute, the transit of Venus will be on. Such is the accuracy of science! But again and again the even greater accuracy of prophecy has been put past dispute. Read Zechariah's description of the first appearance of Jesus in his triumphal entry into Jerusalem, "Riding upon an ass, even upon a colt the foal of an ass," and remember this, that over seven hundred years intervened between the declaration and the deed. Generation after generation had passed; almost countless kings had been born to the various thrones of the earth; the little sentence, for the most part, was forgotten by even Bible students;

and yet, in perfect accord with the Word of God, it came to pass. So it will be again when "His feet shall stand upon Mount Zion," and "His law shall come forth from Jerusalem," and His scepter shall extend "from sea to sea and from the river unto the ends of the earth," "for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it."

The First Resurrection.

¶ **It will be concurrent with the Savior's appearance.** "The Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God, and the dead in Christ shall rise first." The word "first" here simply assigns the ressurrection of the righteous dead—when "the corruptible puts on incorruption" to precedence over the marvelous change of the living saints—when "the mortal puts on immortality." The rest of the sentence, however, makes the return of the Lord and the resurrection of the saints concurrent events—the latter the instant resultant of the former. At the last trump that resurrection will occur "in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye" (1 Cor. 15:52). "Then they that are Christ's at his coming" (1 Cor. 15:23). A. J. Gordon truthfully remarks, "Any doctrine of the resurrection dissociated from the Advent, must be false; * * * no atonement apart from the cross; no resurrection apart from the coming." It is "at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ that there is to be a gathering together unto him" (2 Thes. 2:1). A writer tells of the old colored saint, father of a numerous family, who lived in Northern Georgia in 1833, when the notable meteoric display, known as "the falling of the stars," occurred. Being wakened by the noise and confusion in the street, he looked out from the window of his humble home, and

seeing, as he supposed, the stars of heaven falling like snow flakes, he thought the end had come, and quickly roused his wife and children, saying: "De day ob de Law'd am at han!" Hurrying them into the streets, where the scene was indescribable, the old man turned to his companion and said, "Ol' 'oman, de Law'd am a comin'; and jis' you take de chil'un along up to de public squar' and stop dar 'till I come. I'se gwine down in de gaurdin' an' see old Massa git up, and jist as soon as he do, him and me 'ill come long up to de squar', and we'll all go up to meet de Lawd togedah!" That man, incapable of reading the word for himself, had not listened to the reading and explanation of the Scriptures in vain. He knew that the Savior's reappearance would be the signal for the resurrection of every sleeping saint.

¶ **It will be accomplished by the Savior's voice.** "The Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God, and the dead in Christ shall rise first." It is doubtful if there be a great event of the future that has not already been enacted upon a small scale—an adumbration of that which is to come; it is equally to be questioned if there be a great truth that has not found its symbols in some circumstance of the past. The resurrection is no exception! The resuscitations of the New Testament are the shadows of the resurrection. They were accomplished, everyone, by the Savior's voice. To the widow's son He said, "Young man, I say unto thee, arise; and he that was dead sat up and began to speak" (Luke 7:14-15). To Jarius' daughter, "I say unto thee arise. And straightway the damsel rose up and walked" (Mark 5:41, 42), while to Lazarus, who had lain "four days in the grave, he cried with a loud voice, Lazarus come forth; and he

that was dead came forth" (Jno. 11:43). It is said that Calhoun was unwilling to die until they should bear him again to the Senate chamber that he might listen to Clay's voice once more—the voice he regarded as the most eloquent known to the tongue of man. But the voice of Christ will be so much more eloquent that by it the dying shall be revived and the dead quickened into life again. "The dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that hear shall live."

¶ **The resurrection will concern only the sleeping saints.** "The dead in Christ" are all that are mentioned as having any part in this resurrection (1 Thes. 4:16). The explanation is at hand. "The rest of the dead lived not until the thousand years should be finished. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection" (Rev. 20:5, 6). It will require a more ingenious man than has yet employed tongue or driven pen to disprove the two resurrections of Scripture. The number of instances in which the first and second resurrections are spoken of, the easy explanation of such passages as Daniel 12:2 and John 5:28, together with the meaningful phrase "the resurrection from among the dead," as employed in Luke 20:35, Phil. 3:11, Acts 4:2 —making the first resurrection clearly elective—form the chain of argument which such men as Baines, Blackstone, Gordon, Brooks, West and others—too numerous to mention—have forged on the anvil of the Word. The translation of Daniel 12:2 by Tregelles, "And many from among the sleepers of the dust of the earth shall awake. These (that awake) shall be unto everlasting life. But those (the rest of the sleepers who awake later) shall be unto shame and everlasting contempt," instead of being "a theory created by a premillennarian to carry his point,

and absolutely unknown to commentators," as one writer at least contends, is approved by such eminent rabbis as Saadia Haggion and Eben Ezra and employed by some of the best commentators, while the refusal to let the word "hour," in John 5:28, 29, refer to at least as long a period as has already been covered by its use in John 4:23 and 5:25, reveals an indisposition to be convinced. However, the utter absurdity of straining, or spiritualizing Scripture is only reached when one opponent of two resurrections comes to treat Rev. 20:4-6, and contends that the first resurrection, there spoken of, is not that of persons at all but of "principles," an interpretation which, as one has already suggested,, would present the spectacle of "principles" being beheaded "for the witness of Jesus," "principles" refusing to worship the beast, "principles" with foreheads and hands on which they decline to receive a mark, and "principles" over "which the second death hath no power," but which shall be "priests of God and of Christ." Following this to its logical conclusion, "the rest of the dead" must also be "principles," so that we could have no resurrection of persons at all."

¶ It is no argument against two resurrections to remind us that for centuries "reverent students of the Bible" knew nothing of it, any more than it is against the Great Commission, which, for the same length of time, was overlooked, neglected, and, when brought to light, ardently disputed. But to accept this biblical doctrine is to receive an inspiration to holy living such as that which characterized Paul, who cutting loose from all things that bound him to the world, affirmed his willingness to count them all but loss, "if by any means, he might attain unto the **out-resurrection from the dead.**"

The Supreme Rapture.

¶ Returning to our preliminary sketch again we find the apostle describing it in these words: "The dead in Christ shall rise first; then we that are alive, that are left, shall together with them be caught up in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord."

¶ Three features of the Rapture are here clearly suggested. It will be signalized by the re-wedding of body and spirit; it will be characterized by the change of the mortal and the corruptible, and it will consummate the communion of the saints and the Savior.

¶ **It will be signalized by the re-wedding of body and spirit.** The clear significance of the phrase "even so also, them that are fallen asleep in Jesus will God bring with him," is to the effect that "the spirits of just men made perfect" are now with God. But their bodies lie buried in sea and on land. Our coming Christ will bring the spirits down with Him, and at the sound of his voice the graves shall give up their dead. And when the body and the spirit, divorced by the last enemy, meet in the presence of our Master, He, by His word, will so wed them together that neither man nor devil will ever again divide them asunder. If one could conceive the glory that shall clothe these bodies of ours, when, redemmed from humiliation, they are "conformed to the likeness" of our Lord, and the splendor that shall mark our "spirits"—"made perfect"—he would somewhat realize the meaning of the eternal marriage of the two. This is the hour, and the event, of which the apostle wrote to the Romans—"The earnest expectation of the creation waiteth for the revealing of the sons of God, * * * for we know that the

whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now; and not only so, but ourselves also, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for our adoption, to wit, the redemption of our bodies." It is little wonder, therefore, that an Old Testament prophet, who was speaking to quicken Israel—"dead in trespasses and in sins"— should have expressed the very thought that will characterize that glad hour when the voice of the Son shall proclaim the approaching rapture; and men shall know the more remote and more blessed meaning of Isaiah's words, "Awake and sing" ye that dwell in the dust, for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out her dead" (26:19). We have read Ingraham's "Prince of the House of David," and have tried to imagine the joy of that marriage occasion when Lazarus, whose recent decease had thrown every participant into pitiful sorrow, now resuscitated, lends by his living presence, such surpassing happiness as no wedding party had ever before experienced; but we confess frankly that the joy of the hour when all perfected spirits and all glorified bodies shall be joined by the word of the Lord Jesus cannot be compassed by the imagination! **Rapture!** is the word.

¶ **It will be characterized by the change of the mortal and the corruptible.** "The dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed; for this corruptible must put on incorruption; and this mortal must put on immortality. But when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying, Death is swallowed up in victory." What an hour? At that moment those that have come out of their graves, in the full realization of their eternal conquest, will almost tauntingly

ask of their defeated foe, "Oh, death where is thy victory?" while those that have not slept, but, by the coming of Christ the Master, have put on their immortality, will voice their conscious triumph in the speech, "Oh, death where is thy sting?" and sing their joy in the sentence, "Thanks be to God who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." Dr. Gordon's comparison, "the charcoal and the diamond are the same substance; only that one is carbon in its humiliation and the other carbon in its glory; so is this tabernacle in which we now dwell, in comparison with our house which is from heaven," is not only full of beauty, but biblically justified. When, however, one comes to speak of the saints perfected in body, soul and spirit, there are no objects of earth with which to liken them. Jesus said, "They are equal unto the angels and are sons of God, being sons of the resurrection" (Luke 20:36).

¶ **It will consummate the communion of the saints and the Savior.** The phrase "shall together with them be caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so shall we ever be with the Lord" involves a two-fold communion—the communion of one with another, and of all with their Lord. The closeness of that communion, and the sweetness of that fellowship finds no expression sufficient, short of the marriage relation. "They that were ready went in with him to the marriage feast" (Matt. 25:10). It is little wonder that on the consummation of this event there should be heard the voice of a great multitude as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunder, saying, "Hallelujah, for the Lord our God, the Almighty reigneth; let us rejoice and be exceeding glad. And let us give the glory unto Him,

for the marriage of the Lamb is come and his wife hath made herself ready" (Rev. 10:6-7). We confess frankly that when all of this imagery of prophetic promise passes before one's mind, he begins to understand the spirit and speech of Samuel Rutherford, who, while he languished in prison at Aberdeen, divided his time between singing God's praises on the one side, and pleading for the reappearance of His Son on the other, and we marvel not at his speech: "O fairest among the sons of men; why stayeth thus so long away? Oh, heavens move fast! Oh, time, run, run, and hasten the marriage day! for love is tormented with delays!"

THE TRIBULATION AND THE TRANSLATION.

THE Tribulation is a biblical phrase employed to portray the hour of the earth's matchless agony—the social convulsion of the ages. And yet, to speak of it need not necessarily sadden men, nor sorrow women. All progress is the product of suffering; and all blessed victories are the outcome of battle. The mightiest nations of the earth were baptized in blood, and then made a blessing to others. One that has read the history of Germany, or of England, or of America, ought not to be surprised that when the Kingdom of God comes to the earth it will be set up in spite of social revolutions, amid the ruins of apostate religions, and will end the bloodiest of all rebellions. And yet believers should not permit the tribulation to greatly trouble them, knowing the triumph that lies just beyond.

¶ The natural and scriptural order of our theme would be "the translation and the tribulation," but that you may be left at the conclusion of this chapter with the "blessed hope," we turn our theme about and present the tribulation first and the translation afterward.

"The Tribulation."

¶ This season, which, by prophecy, is appointed to close the present age, is variously described in sacred Scriptures. Jesus speaks of it under the phrases: "great tribulation" (Matt. 24:21), "that tribulation" (Mark

13:24); it is also called "the hour of trial" (Rev. 3:10), and "the fiery trial" (1 Pet. 4:12).

¶ A comparison of Scripture with Scripture will bring out, fully, several thoughts regarding the tribulation.

¶ **It will precede the appearance of the Son of man on the earth.** The twenty-fourth chapter of Matthew is Christ's answer to three questions: (1) "When will Jerusalem be destroyed?" (2) "What shall be the sign of Thy coming?" (3) "What of the end of the world?" In answer to the second of these questions Jesus, when He had fully described "the tribulation" that would come upon the earth, concluded, "Immediately after the tribulation of those days, the sun shall be darkened and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken: and then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory" (Matt. 24:29-30). There is, then, in this plan of immutable prophecy, no hint of the conversion of the whole world—the conclusion of a millennium of peace, prosperity and righteousness, preceding His appearance! On the contrary, rebellion, battle and blood create the social "midnight" upon which the shout shall break, "Behold! the Bridegroom cometh" (Matt. 25:6)!

¶ **It will be a season of incomparable suffering.** Daniel, the great seer of the Old Testament Scripture, said of this very season, "There shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time" (12:1). Of that time Jesus said, "Then shall be great tribulation, such as hath not been from the begin-

ning of the world until now; no, nor ever shall be" (Matt. 24:21). When John was privileged the apocalyptic vision he listened to the blasts of seven trumpets (Rev. 8:6—9:21), each succeeding one of which increased the sorrows of the earth, producing an agony that made men seek death, only to find that desire ungratified, and "death fleeing from them" (9:7); and later, to witness poured out upon the earth, seven vials of wrath, the fourth of which scorched men as with fire, and the fifth of which left them gnawing their tongues for pain (16:8-10).

¶ There can be little doubt that the pains of this period are twofold. On the one side there are the sufferings of God's people—Israel, and Gentile converts made since the Church stole away to meet its coming Christ, as the beast and the false prophet oppress and persecute them. On the other side, toward the end of the reign of the Antichrist, God is pouring out His wrath upon those that have followed "the Man of Sin," and whose characters are such that even unspeakable suffering only increase the blasphemy with which they speak God's name (Rev. 16:11-11).

¶ In Matthew 24:15-22, Christ speaks particularly of the sufferings that shall fall upon God's ancient people and the new Gentile converts; but Revelation 8, 9 and 16, describe more especially the sufferings that shall be visited upon the subjects of the Anti-christ. Dr. Wayland Hoyt tells us that the word "tribulation" is derived from the Latin "tribulum"—the threshing tool. "It is a heavy, wooden platform. Its under side is rough with bits of flint or savage with iron teeth. Oxen are yoked to it. Forth and back they drag the tribulum over the

prostrate wheat. So the kernels are broken out from the useless husk. There, intermingled with the husk and straw, they lie disimprisoned. Now with broad wooden shovels—fans they are called—men fling the mass against the wind. The wind carries off the chaff and straw, and the pure grain falls by itself in a golden pile." That is exactly what the sufferings of the great period of the Tribulation will accomplish for saint and sinner. In a time of unusual peace and prosperity it is not easy to distinguish between them; but when peace is taken from the earth, when pain is universal, when the flames have reached a white heat, then the gold and the dross will separate, and God's purpose in the Tribulation period will be brought to pass. No wonder the last prophet of the Old Testament, speaking of this time, says: "But who can abide the day of his coming? and who shall stand when he appeareth? for he is like a refiner's fire, and like fuller's soap: and he will sit as a refiner and purify the sons of Levi, and refine them as gold and silver; and they shall offer unto Jehovah offerings in righteousness." How significant the language with which he follows this: "I will come near to you to judgment; and I will be a swift witness against the sorcerers and against the adulterers and against the false swearers and against those that oppress the hireling in his wages, the widow and the fatherless, and that turn aside the sojourner from his right, and fear not me, saith Jehovah of hosts. For I, Jehovah, change not" (Mal. 3:5-6).

¶ **It will be a season of short duration.** Of it Jesus says, "Except those days had been shortened, no flesh would have been saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened" (Matt. 24:22). With this

agrees perfectly the voice of the Apocalypse, saying, "Woe for the earth and for the sea: because the devil is gone down unto you, having great wrath, knowing that he hath but a short time" (Rev. 12:12). The very length of time is suggested when, two verses later, it is written, "There were given to the woman the two wings of the great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness unto her place, where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent" (12:14). That "a time and times and half a time" means three years and a half, is put past further dispute, when we remember that it was previously written that "the woman fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God, that there they may nourish her a thousand two hundred and threescore days" (12:6), exactly three years and a half by the Jewish calendar.

¶ When that period of intolerable pain shall be upon the world, and the sorrows of Satan's children are increased by uncertainty as to what is yet to come, the children of God will be encouraged to bear their oppressions by the sure promise of "a short season." That will be a time when the Spirit will bring to their remembrance what Paul penned to the Hebrews (10:37), "For yet a very little while, He that cometh shall come, and will not tarry." Yea, even a time when their quickened ears shall catch the advent cry, "Behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me" (Rev. 22:12).

The Translation.

¶ "The Jew," "the Gentile," and "the Church of God" are the three classes known to Scripture. Your attention has already been called to certain Scriptures that involve suffering for God's ancient people—the Jews, and

for the Gentile converts of the tribulation period; but you are concerned to know what is to be the state of "the Church," when this intolerable torment shall come upon the earth. That state is as joyful as the scenes through which we have just passed are sorrowful!

¶ **The Church will have already accomplished a triumphant exit...** Daniel says, "At that time thy people shall be delivered, everyone that shall be found written in the book. And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake; some (the sleeping believers) to everlasting life" (12:2). This Old Testament prophet is confirmed by the New Testament teaching. To the Corinthians Paul declared: "I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality" (1 Cor. 15:51-53). When writing to the Thessalonians he tells them how these changed ones "shall be caught up in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord" (1 Thess. 4:17). What a remarkable agreement, so far as resurrection is concerned, with Isah's declaration that puts into the lips of the Lord the phrase, "my dead bodies shall rise" (26:19); and with the New Testament teaching concerning translation, for it was Christ, who, speaking of the day when the Son of man should be revealed, said: "In that day, he that shall be on the housetop, and his goods in the house, let him not go down to take them away: and let him that is in the field likewise not return back. Remember Lot's wife! Whosoever

shall seek to gain his life shall lose it: but whosoever shall lose his life shall preserve it. I say unto you, In that night, there shall be two men on one bed; the one shall be taken, and the other shall be left. There shall be two women grinding together; the one shall be taken, and the other shall be left. And they answer say unto him, Where, Lord? And he said unto them, Where the body is, thither will the eagles also be gathered together" (Luke 17:31-37). Christ is the magnetic body, and eagles are the Scripture symbols of saints. Isaiah, thinking of that sweet meeting of saints and Savior, in some chamber of beauty beyond the clouds, voices it after this manner: "Come, my people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee: hide thyself for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast. For, behold, Jehovah cometh forth out of his place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity: the earth also shall disclose her blood and shall no more cover her slain" (26:20-21). We are fully persuaded, also, that the glorious woman who, at the daybreak of persecution, went into the wilderness, where "God had prepared her a place, there to nourish her for a thousand two hundred and three score days" is the apocalyptic picture of the catching away of believers (12:6). It is a significant thing that John says a little later, "There was given to the woman the two wings of the great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness unto her place, where she is nourished for a time, and times and half a time, from the face of the serpent," for is it not written that when the woman has escaped him entirely, his wrath waxed, and he went away "to make war with the rest of her seed, that keep the commandments of

God, and hold the testimony of Jesus" (12:14-15)? Or, in other words, with those Jewish believers, and Gentile converts—made as a result of the sudden translation and the sweeping tribulation. All of this is in confirmation of the promise Christ makes His own concerning this period, "because thou didst keep the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of trial, that hour which is to come upon the whole world, to try them that dwell upon the earth" (Rev. 3:10). Quoting the words of the Lord, "Behold, I come as a thief," Gordon comments, "Not one of the sleeping household saw the robber as he snatched the jewels and crept away," and then significantly adds, "And they shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels."

¶ The saints' sudden exit is a sure sign of the Savior's speedy entry into the world. The author of "Ecce Venit" has called attention to the fact that "to meet the Lord in the air" are words crowded with significance, conveying the idea of "to meet and return with," "As the disciples in Rome went out to meet Paul when they heard of his approach, and accompanied him to the city; as the wise virgins are pictured as going forth to meet the bridegroom and attending him to the house of the bride,—so by the same form of speech it is here implied that the Church will be raptured away to join the Lord on His advancing way, and escort Him back to the earth."

¶ This is what Daniel saw when the Ancient of Days—"his raiment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like pure wool"—came to the throne: "thousands of thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him" (7:9, 10). Jude also makes

mention of this attendant company, "Behold, the Lord comes with ten thousand of His holy ones, to execute judgment upon all, and to convict all the ungodly of all their works of ungodliness which they have ungodly wrought, and of all the hard things which ungodly sinners have spoken against him" (vs. 14-15).

¶ More things of earth are made from the "pattern seen in the mount" than men imagine. In their admiration of the governments of earth, men must remember that their customs and manners are always and only a degenerate copy of the divine government. When the Indian and Oklahoma territories became a state, the author happened, on that very day, to be in the city that was the home of the first Governor. Immediately upon receiving the reins of government, he returned from Guthrie, whither he had gone to receive for himself authority. But, preceding his appearance, his personal friends stole away to join him, and accompany him in his home-coming. It was a glad and gala hour when the Governor arrived. The whole city was adorned in his honor; musical bands marched the street, discoursing martial music. The crowds that attended him on the train were small beside those that awaited his arrival, and when his feet touched the earth and he stood in the midst of his own, cheer on cheer voiced at once the consciousness of his honor and the pleasure of the people. If one goes back into ancient history and reads of the reception accorded Pompey, when, in September 61, B. C., he approached the City of the Seven Hills, where for two whole days crowded processions, with trophies from every land, moved along the Via Sacra, amidst the applause of the people, he has yet a greater, but still a faint, suggestion

of what it shall mean when Christ shall come, attended by the noble army of the saints, to take His throne!

¶ But when the rightful Ruler of the earth receives from His Father the Kingdom there will be a result which, for the whole world, will be as blessed as its execution will be bloody.

¶ We speak of **the passing of Satan's scepter.** If the Book of Revelation involves, as we believe it does, the plan of the ages, it is little wonder that it should present scenes of constant conflict—Satan and his hosts contending for the supremacy in the earth, and temporarily winning the same, only to find themselves eventually overthrown, their power broken, and the scepter taken forever by the hand of the Son of God. All past history is but the record of this conflict. Part by part inspired prophecy has been fulfilled. The Devil has fought his battles, secured certain temporary victories, and, judged by his present movements, anticipates the day when he can put his mark upon the forehead and in the hand of every man of earth. The dream is not a delusion! There is to be "given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them:" and there is to be "given to him authority over every tribe and people and tongue and nation. And all that dwell on the earth shall worship him, every one whose name hath not been written from the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb that hath been slain" (Rev. 13:7-8).

¶ But, alas for the dream of devils! Dispossession, discomfiture and death is the portion of every one, from Satan—the leader—to the most insignificant spirit following him. No sooner hath the first angel sounded, and the hosts of hell begin to trample the earth with piti-

less feet, than John cries: "I saw another strong angel coming down out of heaven, arrayed with a cloud; and the rainbow was upon his head, and his face was as the sun, and his feet as pillars of fire" (Rev. 10:1). "And there followed great voices in heaven, and they said: The kingdoms of the world are become the kingdom of our Lord, and of his Christ: and he shall reign for ever and ever" (Rev. 11:15).

¶ Again, when the war in heaven is over, and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world, is cast down to the earth and then begins his persecution of the people of God, knowing that he hath but a little time for his hellish endeavor, John "hears a great voice in heaven, saying, Now is come the salvation, and the power, and the kingdom of our God, and the authority of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, who accuseth them before our God day and night"—a victory in heaven that is to have its answering victory upon the earth, for when, by the execution of the Divine will, the beast is overthrown, and Babylon—the mother of harlots—is brought to a deserved end, the voice of a great multitude in heaven breaks forth, "Hallelujah! Salvation and glory and power belong to our God: for true and righteous are his judgments; for he hath judged the great harlot, her that corrupted the earth with her fornication, and he hath avenged the blood of his servants at her hand. And a second time they say, Hallelujah" (Rev. 19:1-2). And yet again, while the man of God listens, the voice of the multitude breaks forth, "as the voice of many waters, yea, as the voice of mighty thunders, saying Hallelujah: for the Lord our God, the Almighty, reigneth" (Rev. 19:6).

¶ If it be a joy to behold the angel coming down out of heaven and laying hold on the dragon, the old serpent, which is the Devil and Satan, and binding him for a thousand years, and casting him into the abyss, and saying unto him, "Thou shalt deceive the nations no more until the thousand years be finished" (Rev. 20:1-5), the climax of Christian exultation is reached, when at the end of the millennium, Satan having been loosened for a little season out of his prison, to compass the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city, we behold fire come down out of heaven to devour him, and see the Devil, which deceived them, cast into the lake of fire and brimstone (Rev. 20:9, 10), and know that the last rebellion against the authority of Jesus is at an end, and the last rebel against His government is forever overthrown! Then will our mouths be filled with praises, the expressions of which are hindered by no fearful apprehensions; and with hallelujahs, in the rendition of which the new heaven and the new earth shall joyfully unite. What man can read the story of Esther and withhold rejoicing when Haman is brought to judgment; or turn the pages of history that Herod stained with innocent blood, without crying, "How long, oh Lord, how long?" Who, then, that hates sin and loves righteousness can grieve when Satan and all his hosts are overthrown, and the scepter is put forever into the hand of the blessed Son of God? Let those who will, write or speak of "the sorrows of Satan"; as for us, we join with Dr. Justin Fulton in saying: "If present when this enemy of God and man meets his doom, we should ,with saints and angels gladly join in the song 'Hallelujah, 'tis done!"

THE KINGDOM AND THE RESURRECTION BODY.

THE discussion in the foregoing chapter is not complete apart from a fuller presentation of the subject, "The Resurrection Body." Almost without exception, the auditors of a discussion of "The Return of the Lord," and even of "The Millennium" itself, are left either with no instruction at all as to the character of the resurrection bodies—the subjects of the kingdom—or with vague and uncertain suggestions concerning the same.

¶ This is not the fault of the Scriptures, but rather of students and expositors of the same. The New Testament is fairly replete with allusions to the theme; while the fifteenth chapter of 1 Corinthians is a veritable compendium of doctrine upon the subject. Paul imagines among his readers a Materialist who puts the questions: "How are the dead raised up, and with what manner of body do they come? And, in a discussion that is as full as clear, he answers both questions; they are raised by the voice of Him with whom is "all power in heaven and earth"; and their bodies are "incorruptible," "glorious," "powerful" and "spiritual." This presentation of the subject is in perfect accord with the definition of the kingdom to which we have already given attention, and the Pauline discussion involves **certain established scriptural truths.**

The Kingdom and Its Subjects.

¶ First—**The kingdom is not identical with Christian civilization.** The great characteristic of Christian civil-

ization is "flesh and blood." Every subject of Christian civilization is "flesh and blood;" yet Paul declares that "Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God." The logical conclusion is that while we have a so-called Christian civlization we have not as yet the "kingdom of God." One of the most common, and one of the least excusable of mistakes, in the present-day theology, finds expression in this phrase, "the kingdom of God." Men talk constantly as if the kingdom of God had come already. They dispute their own speech the moment they pray, as Christ taught them, "Thy kingdom come; thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven." It will be admitted upon intelligent reflection that Christ is not the sovereign of any city upon the face of the earth; that He is not the ruler of any village or hamlet. A study of the social and moral conditons of the cleanest rural district will confirm the claims of Scripture that up to the present moment Satan remains in power—"the god of this world." Have you never thought of what Jesus said, in answer to Pilate's question, "Art thou the king of the Jews?" "My kingdom is not of this world; if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews; but now is my kingdom not from hence," and how it comports with Paul's claims?

¶ **The kingdom is not even made up of mortal men.** "Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God." What does the apostle mean? What he says; and all Scripture confirms him. The superb characteristic of the kingdom of God will be the immortality of its subjects. The Scriptures plainly affirm who and what they shall be. The resurrection saints, while sharing with Him the administration of the kingdom, will be His subjects every

one, for when "the Lord shall descend from heaven with a shout;" in other words, when "the King comes back again," "the dead in Christ shall rise first." That is the hour in which "corruption shall put on incorruption" and the life of these risen saints will not be a mortal one, dependent upon the heart-beat—"flesh and blood;" but rather like that in which their Lord lived again after his resurrection from the dead—a body of "flesh and bone"—animated by the eternal spirit, "a spirtual body." There is a remarkable passage in Luke 20:35-36, the meaning of which lends light to this subject. The Sadducees, who said there was no resurrection, had questioned Jesus concerning the woman who had seven husbands, "In the resurrection, therefore whose wife of them shall she be? for the seven had her to wife." And Jesus answered, "The sons of this world marry, and are given in marriage; but they that are accounted worthy to attain to that world. and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry, nor are given in marriage; for neither can they die any more; for they are equal unto the angels; (the exact expression is, "They are angel-like") and are sons of God, being sons of the resurrection." And now what is it to be angel-like? Is it to be bodiless? No! Every angel that has appeared on the earth has appeared in bodily form. They have sat at human tables, and have taken human food; they have exercised gracious missions for men in human forms. The great difference has been that they were not mortal; that their natural home was in a higher sphere.

¶ **Living believers shall be changed,** "in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye" and "the mortal shall put on immortality." There is no indication either that con-

verts, made from the Jewish people and the nations, during the millennium, under the personal reign of Christ, will be mortal men, and the very statement of Scripture, "They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run and not be weary; and they shall walk and not faint," refers to the children of the kingdom in the millennial age (read the context), when, as Gordon puts it, "Celestial flight shall alternate with terrestrial travel, and each alike shall be unwearying."

¶ There never was a kingdom in the realm of which rebels might not be found, and the Kingdom of God will be no exception! But in that golden era when He shall reign over a "new earth" the great prophet Isaiah distinctly declares, "There shall be no more thence an infant of days, nor an old man that hath not filled his days: for the child shall die a hundred years old, and the sinner, being a hundred years old, shall be accursed" (69:20). Even wicked and rebellious men will have their days extended in the millennium. For He must reign until He shall put "all enemies under His feet." And "the last enemy that shall be abolished is death." When one remembers that the subjects of this kingdom are to be immortal, we understand why Jesus could at once affirm, concerning John the Baptist, "there is none greater" and yet declare, "he that is but little in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he."

Christ's Second Appearance.

¶ This kingdom is promised only at Christ's second appearance. He has gone "to receive for himself a kingdom and to return." When Paul was delivering his charge to Timothy to "preach the word; be instant in

season, out of season," he did it in the sight of God and Jesus Christ, whom, he said, should "judge the living and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom." The order and the connection are alike expressed in the apostle's speech—the "appearing" first; the "kingdom" afterward, and "the kingdom," the consequence of the "ap pealing." If there be an instance in Scripture where the establishment of the Kingdom of God is presented as preceding the appearance of the King we are not familiar with it. If "the kingdom" is to come to this world and all the blessed results promised for the millennial age are to follow its establishment, the King Himself must appear to "set it up"; and, only when the sceptre is in His hands will their "swords be beaten into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks, and nation shall not lift up a sword against nation;" only when the sceptre is in His hand will the "lion and the lamb lie down together" and "men cease to love war"; only when the sceptre is in His hand shall "the voice of weeping and the voice of crying fail"; and "men build houses and inhabit them, and plant vineyards and eat the fruit thereof," and the custom, now so prevalent, whereby one builds and another inhabits, shall cease. When John contemplated these blessed results of His return, it is little wonder that he cried: "Come, Lord Jesus! Come quickly!"

The Changes To Be Accomplished.

¶ "Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed; in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump; for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised, incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.

But when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? The sting of death is sin; and the power of sin is the law; but thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

¶ These changes involve the mightiest of mysteries. Paul does not attempt to fully explain the mystery of the resurrection. Why should he? Is God under any obligation to lay bare His last secret? The deep things belong to Him. I may not know all the processes by which a little seed sends life out of apparent death and transforms earth, air and water into green blade and bewitching flowers. The processes are God's mystery; the product is our joy. Why not be glad that Science falters, when, scalpel in hand, it seeks to lay bare the divine secrets? To me, God is the more glorious because some of His ways are "past finding out"; and if I may not know how these changes are wrought I may receive from the apostle the statement of their features, and aspire by faith to the more blessed experience of either a resurrection from the dead, by which my corruptible body shall be made incorruptible, or a victory against the grave by which my mortality shall become immortal; and these are the things involved in these changes.

¶ They will convert the corruptible into the incorruptible. "For the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible. For this corruptible must put on incorruption. . . . Death is swallowed up in victory." Therein is the promise of redemption from the grave. It is the one note of joy for the bereaved. Nothing that has

ever come into the world has so scarred its face, and so sorrowed human hearts as the spade of the cemetery sexton. The author often drives through beautiful Lakewood. In springtime, all nature breaks into beauty there. The blooming flowers are as fresh and fragrant as the season; the green sward is a landscape of God indeed; the monuments and obelisks are expressions of classic beauty, marking the resting places of the beloved dead. But he hates the cemetery, none the less! It has started too many tears, broken too many hearts, destroyed too many homes, dissipated too much of happiness, given rise to too great sorrow and grief; it has shown too little pity for bereaved mothers; too little concern for broken-hearted fathers; too slight a sorrow for suffering brothers and sisters; and the only way that one can be happy, and yet wander in the realm where the last enemy has conquered, is to keep in mind the promise of resurrection, and anticipate the day when the provisions of this text shall be perfected and the graves of the believers shall be broken up; the day when the beauty of the trees, the fragrance of the flowers, and the music of the birds shall be exceeded a hundred-fold, yea, a thousand, by the hosts of God's redeemed, standing in triumph over the last Enemy, clad "in white," having conquered corruption.

¶ And yet this is not all, for in that hour one other, and equally wondorous change shall be accomplished:—

¶ **Believing mortals shall be made to be immortals.** For is it not also written, "This mortal shall put on immortality. . . . And when this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory." Ah, what a victory! We used to wonder at the meaning of Jesus'

words at Lazarus' grave, "I am the Resurrection and the Life: he that believeth on me, though he die, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth on me shall never die." We could understand the first, "He that believeth on me, though he die, yet shall he live again"; we knew that the grave had to give up its dead; we understood perfectly that corruption was to give place to incorruption; but what did our Master mean by the phrase that "whosoever liveth and believeth on me shall never die"? We had known people that believe in Him, while living, and yet they had died. What mystery therefore was our Master speaking? Oh, the advantage of comparing Scripture with Scripture! No mystery whatever! When He said, "He that believeth on me though he die, yet shall he live," He uttered the sentence that compassd the whole condition of the deceased; but when He added, "Whosoever liveth and believeth on me shall never die," He referred not to the company of those that had gone to the grave, but to the company of those that living when He shall appear, escape the grave and change from the mortal to the immortal;—scorn, then, the claims of the last Enemy by saying, "Oh, death, where is thy sting?" knowing full well that this devastating power cannot do its work against the sons of God that shall shine forth in the presence of Him who hath conquered Death once for all.

The Glorious Change.

¶ What a glorious change to contemplate! What else does the man whose soul is saved need to complete the redemption except to have such a change come over his body—that temple of the Holy Ghost—as will make it an eternal habitation fit for the spirit with which God has

possessed it? The greatest trials of one's life, the greatest annoyances, the most frightful sins possible to any of us are in consequence of the flesh, the very laws of which war against the spirit. That is what the apostle means when in the seventh chapter of Romans he writes, "I am carnal, sold under sin. For that which I do, I know not: for not what I would, that do I practice; but what I hate, that I do. But if what I would not, that I do, I consent unto the law that it is good. So, now, it is no more I that do it, but sin which dwelleth in me. I find then the law, that, to me who would do good, evil is present. For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: but I see a different law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity under the law of sin which is in my members. O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me out of the body of this death?" That is the cry of every one of us! We are tethered, as it were, to a tenement which takes on the form of our very personality; and yet has a hundred doors open to the incoming of the evil one. But when He comes, under whose hands these mighty changes shall be wrought, the bodies which sleep in the graves shall no more surely put on incorruption than shall these mortal bodies put on immortality—changed from dishonor to glory; from weakness to power; from the natural body to the spiritual; and in that hour we shall shine forth as the children of "the kingdom." We like to think of the bodies that shall be—with all corruption gone—incorruptible! with all mortality gone—immortal! with all weakness gone—powerful! with all dishonor removed—made glorious! with all carnal appetite destroyed—spiritual! We shall not attempt to imagine

the glory and beauty of such a body, but ask you to abide with us content in the significance of the Word of God concerning the coming Savior, and the changed life, and to "wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall fashion anew the body of our humiliation, that it may be conformed to the body of his glory" (Phil. 3:21).

¶ Now the Apostle Paul makes all of this an argument to lead up to a great final sentence, which contains a call to courageous service.

¶ "Wherefore, my beloved brethren; be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not vain in the Lord."

THE USURPER'S SHORT REIGN.

TWO volumes, recently from the press, are worthy of a wide reading. One of these comes from the pen of that brilliant, studious layman, Philip Mauro, and is entitled "The Number of Man," and the other from New York's most notable pastor-preacher, Dr. I. M. Haldeman, and bears the title, "The Signs of the Times."

¶ They illustrate how the lay mind, and that of the schooled minister run together, when each pursues an unbiassed study of the Bible.

¶ Their views of the Anti Christ are in fundamental agreement. The period of his supremacy is to be short, and the march of modern movements in both the secular and religious world, indicate his soon-coming. They read this in the decline of faith as expressed by the word "modernism," which stands for the repudiation of all supernatural and sacred authority; they read it in the progress of the "devil's lie," that men by natural wisdom can know all there is to be known of God. They read it in that "mental assassination" that is voiced by "Theosophy," "New Thought," "Christian Science," and allied deceptions; they read it in that increasing strife that takes the form of growing "Socialism" in one land, "Anarchy" in another, and "Nihilism" in a third. They read it in that inordinate greed that characterizes corporate wealth, on the part of co-operating individuals, and increased navies and armies, on the part of mighty na-

tions; they read it in the widespread apostacy in Protestism, and the cunning consummation of papal powers and plans. They hold that the rise of the Antichrist will be the signal of the "parousia" or the sudden appearance of Christ in the heavens to catch up His people for the brief period of the blessed Rapture in which the Antichrist, the Beast and the False Prophet, shall have their bloody day on earth, to be ended by the "Epiphany," or the revelation of the King, coming in power, attended by His saints, to uncrown and conquer His enemy and take the throne. "The Revelation," 13th and 14th chapters, present the Antichrist, the False Prophet, and some features of the final conflict.

The First Beast—The Antichrist.

¶ "And I saw a beast coming up out of the sea, having ten horns and seven heads, and on his horns ten diadems, and upon his heads names of blasphemy," etc. (Rev. 13:1-10).

¶ To four facts we call attention.

¶ First—**The rise of this beast is political.** "And I saw a beast coming up out of the sea, having ten horns and seven heads, and on his horns ten diadems."

¶ To "rise up out of the earth" is an expression employed in Scripture to express exaltation from among the people; and if one will follow the Word through, he will see that to "rise up out of the sea," is to come forth from the midst of agitated peoples. In Isaiah 57:20 we read, "The wicked are like the troubled sea which cannot rest, whose waters cast up dirt." In Daniel's (7:3) vision, "four great beasts come from the sea"; and you will remember that when he afterward interprets, he tells us that this was out of the turbulent nations of his

time; and in Revelation 17:15. "The waters which thou sawest, where the harlot sitteth, are peoples, and multitudes, and nations and tongues." This Beast then will come to his ascendency in a time when the states of the earth are turbulent; just such a condition as Christ himself describes as set to characterize the last days. See Matt. 24:6-21. If there were needed further proof that his rise is political, that exists abundantly in the figure of "the ten horns and seven heads, and on his horns ten diadems." Daniel has forever settled the question of the meaning of horns, heads and diadems. See Dan. 7:24 If the beast of Daniel's vision represented, as he tells us it did, the Babylonian, Medo-Persian, Graeco-Macedonian and Roman Empires, it is fairly evident that this beast will represent the whole combination of world-powers, "the parliament of nations," and that is why he is pictured as having ten horns and seven heads and on his horns ten diadems"—seven and ten both being biblical numbers to express entirety or completeness. Here, then, is presented the world's last and only perfect potentate. It is a significant thing, as Haldeman remarks, that already we have had seriously advocated the idea that ten of the strong nations of the earth should form themselves into an alliance to regulate the commerce of the earth, and to determine its mooted questions.

¶ **His speech is blasphemous!** "And upon his heads names of blasphemy * * * and he opened his mouth for blasphemy against God, to blaspheme His name and His tabernacle, even they that dwell in the heaven." For a Biblical definition of blasphemy one needs only to remember that when Jesus had said to the man sick of the palsy, "Thy sins be forgiven thee," certain of the

scribes said within themselves, "This man blasphemeth." In other words, He assumed prerogatives that belonged to God alone. Had he been less than God, the charge of the scribes would have been justified. That is the very assumption that is to characterize the Antichrist. Paul in his second epistle to the Thessalonians (2:3, 4) says, "That man of sin shall be revealed, the son of perdition, he that opposeth and exalteth himself against all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he sitteth in the temple of God, setting himself forth as God."

¶ There are not a few interpreters of the Word, and among them some of the most scholarly and devout, that believe that this feature of the Antichrist finds its perfect fulfillment in the Papacy. They call our attention to the fact that time and again Roman pontiffs have been guilty of this blasphemy, and have encouraged the people to join with them in its emphasis. Dr. Gordon in his "Ecce Venit" catalogues a list of these claims, as do also the other interpreters named. He tells us that Alexander VI., moving to his consecration, passed under a triumphal arch, on which was inscribed, "Caesar was a man; Alexander is a god." Marcellus, in an address to Pope Leo X. at the fifth Lateran Council, exclaims, "Thou art another God on earth." Gregory II. boasts to the Greek emperor: "All the kings of the West reverence the pope as a God on earth." Pope Nicholas wrote: "Wherefore, if those things which I do, be said to be done, not of man, but of God, what can you make me but God?" Scores of like claims, equally blasphemous, have from time to time passed the lips of popes and prelates. Yet the study of prophetic subjects compels us to adopt the view ex-

pressed by Dr. Parsons in the Prophetic Conference, held in New York City in 1879, and concurred in by Mauro and Haldeman and great scholars: "While this last feature of the reign of Antichrist finds its shadow in the pretensions of the papacy, we still believe that a more concrete future fulfillment, springing out of present and patent channels of blasphemy and corruption, will be seen." He would be a poor observer of his times that did not see that they are tending more and more to this final consummation. One of the most dangerous doctrines that has broken out, in the ranks of the hitherto orthodox, is that that insists upon deifying man; and is equally urgent in humanizing God. One needs only to study the subjects treated in books and expounded from the pulpit, to find how prominent a place has been given to these two—"the deity of man," and "the humanity of God." Protestantism at present, therefore, has among its numbers, leaders not a few whose theology will as surely result in paving the way for the coming blasphemer as has the papacy's past claims and conduct. The professed prophets of the present are doing the preliminary work for the great false prophet whose chief business it will be to make the earth and them that dwell in it, to worship the first beast, or man, that shall exalt himself to the place of God over all.

¶ **His sovereignty will be extensive.** "And the dragon gave him his power; and his throne, and great authority; . . . there was given to him authority over every tribe and people and tongue and nation, and all that dwell in the earth shall worship him, everyone whose name hath not been written in the Book of Life."

¶ This is not in consonance with the customary cry of

"Peace!" "Peace!" But what have we, that believe the Word of God, to do with uninspired customs? The sainted Gordon was seldom more eloquent, and never more truthful, than when he said: "Prophecy is the mould in which history is cast; no violence of man, no convulsions of nations can either break that mould or constrain the course of history, that the one should not answer to the other point by point, feature by feature!" And, unless God be a liar, and this Book which He declares to be His "Revelation," deceptious, the sovereignty of Alexander the Great, who is reputed to have wept because there were no more worlds to conquer, will prove to have been an insignificant reign, when, in the light of unfolding history, it will be compelled to endure comparison with that which the Dragon, or Satan, will deliver over into the hand of this "man to come." His reign shall be exactly coextensive with that that is pledged to the coming Christ, for while the latter is to reign "from sea to sea and from the rivers to the ends of the earth," the former is to have "authority over every tribe, and people, and tongue, and nation; and all that dwell on the earth shall worship him, everyone whose names have not been written in the Book of Life." There are only about ten great powers in the whole earth today; only about ten potentates who escape the epithet "petty." In recent years these more and more claim the right to make conquest of the lesser people and uncrown the little kings. Who can tell what will be the end of this imperialism? Will it not take us back again to the doctrine once regnant in the world, namely, "that might is right," and, by the course of history which men shall come to regard as natural, result eventually in that prophesied consum-

mation, a single sovereign whose exalted subordinates shall give him the character of the beast wearing "ten horns, and seven heads, and on his horns ten diadems"?

¶ **His time will be short.** "There was given to him authority to continue forty and two months," "time, times, and half a time," three years and a half—the brief season in which this Antichrist shall exercise his sovereignty, and be able to put into effect his evil and destructive designs. We are not at all able to agree with the brethren that make these "1,260 days" mean so many years. There are three objections to that interpretation, either of which is sufficient. First, it is speculative rather than scriptural; and second, the time is already passed when, tried by that theory, the end of the age would have been on; and finally, if that were true, one might figure out the end of the age, of which knoweth no man. In favor of taking this literally, Reason and Revelation agree. Jesus Christ Himself, in speaking of the end, says, "There shall be great tribulation such as was not seen since the beginning of the world, nor ever shall be; and except those days be shortened, no flesh will be saved; but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened" (Matt. 24: 21-22).

¶ There are many living that remember what three and a half years of civil war meant; what weariness; what sickness; what wounds; what slaughter; what bereavements; what despair; and yet, who imagines that those days were even a faint shadow of the sorrows that shall characterize this time of tribulation? It is of the mercy of God, therefore, that while Christ is to reign on earth for a thousand years, and at the end of that time, His peaceful sovereignty is to be transferred to heaven, to

continue forever; the bloody reign of His great antagonist, the Antichrist, shall be cut short in three and a half seasons, and this usurper shall meet his doom (Rev. 20:1-3). It has been so from the first! When Satan triumphed in the Garden of Eden, almost instantly his Conqueror came; while Haman sat at the king's table, the scaffold was building; when Belshazzar exalted himself to heaven, that night he was slain; while Herod was listening to the huzzahs of the people, who were proclaiming him God, he was smitten of worms and died; and right at the time when this Antichrist shall have clutched the sceptre of universal sovereignty, the hand of might and power shall touch him, his kingdom shall be overthrown, and he himself cast down to chains and imprisonment to be followed by eternal torment, for John's vision was not ended. He says, "And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against him that sat upon the horse and against his army. And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought the signs in his sight, wherewith he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image; they twain were cast alive into the lake of fire that burneth with brimstone" (Rev. 19:19-20, R. V.).

The Second Beast—The False Prophet.

¶ As Christ had His forerunner—John the Baptist—and is to have His Elijah for His second appearance, so the Antichrist will have his prophet.

¶ **He will assume the meekest of meins.** "He has two horns like unto a lamb." The lamb is the most docile and kindly of the domestic animals. The two horns here are commonly accepted as being symbols of dual char-

acter. He claims on the one side, to be a scientist, and on the other, to be a religionist. One of these is the expression of reason; and the other of revelation. The world today is daffy over every man that makes the same claim. As in Hawthorne's "Great Stone Face," it waits for "the coming man"—a Christian Scientist, if you please!

¶ **But his speech will betray him.** "For he spake as a dragon." The voice is a marvelous thing. There is no feature of life that better evidences character, whether among men or beasts. The roar of the lion tells the whole story of his make-up; a wolf may sham membership in a flock of sheep, but when he opens his mouth it is to bark and not to bleat.

¶ And so the voice of this beast is "the voice of the dragon." When we have become well acquainted with men, our trust or distrust is decided by what passes the lips. The tongue tells the tale of character. And when this False Prophet shall appear, the man that is familiar with the Word of God will be the first to detect his falsehoods, and know that whatever his assumptions, he is Satan's agent, set to turn men from the truth to believe a lie!

¶ It will argue nothing that he is able to **present a prophet's credentials.** His signs, making even fire to come down out of heaven to earth in the sight of men, will not suffice. Miracles in themselves will never be a proof of divine appointment. Pretenders have always, through the power of the evil one, been able to duplicate, in large measure, the wonders that were evidently divine. You remember that when Aaron cast down his rod before Pharaoh and his servants, and it became a serpent, the

magicians of Egypt "cast down their rods in like manner, and they became serpents." Here the Devil imitates the divine miracle. And you will remember that the imitation continued unto the swarm of flies. There were magicians and sorcerers in the apostles' time doing mighty works—the power of the evil one. In the day of Moses, God declared the law by which all should be judged. "If there arise in the midst of thee a prophet, or a dreamer of dreams, and he give thee a sign or a wonder, and the sign or wonder come to pass, whereof he spake unto thee, saying, Let us go after other gods, which thou hast not known, and let us serve them; thou shalt not hearken unto the words of the prophet, or unto that dreamer of dreams: for the Lord your God proveth you, to know whether ye love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul. Ye shall walk after the Lord your God, and fear him, and keep his commandments, and obey his voice, and ye shall serve him, and cleave unto him. And that prophet, or that dreamer of dreams, shall be put to death; because he hath spoken rebellion against the Lord your God, which brought you out of the land of Egypt, and redeemed thee out of the house of bondage, to draw thee aside out of the way which the Lord thy God commanded thee to walk in. So shalt thou put away the evil from the midst of thee" (Deut. 13:1-5).

¶ Catholicism has its wonders; Theosophy its signs; Spiritualism and Christian Science their miracles; they are as well attested as were those of the sorcerers of Moses' time. People have gone over to them in great numbers because they have seen these things, falsely supposing that a miracle is always an evidence of divine

appointment. The true test, however, for all fads of faith, a test before which the false prophet himself is to fall, is the test of Deuteronomy. One ought to ask, "What doctrine do these people teach?" One ought to ask whether they lead to the true and living God, or away from Him? Having learned that, he can settle in a moment whether they are from above or below; prophets, true or false. The reason so many people are misled in these matters is that they are so poorly acquainted with the Word of God. You can remind them of the words of Isaiah, "To the law and to the testimony, if they speak not according to this Word it is because there is no light in them," but you can help them in nothing if they are not familiar with the law and the prophets. We meet people that smile sweetly, and at the same time are members of the Christian Science Church; we have never yet met a Theosophist, a Spiritualist or a Christian Scientist that was decently familiar with the Word of God.

¶ In this, there is a word of awful warning!

¶ A man must be grounded in the knowledge of the truth, or else stand in constant danger of giving his worship to the Devil, honestly mistaking him for the Christ of God. For this beast will not take on some hideous mien, so that it will be difficult for men to bow before him; on the contrary, peculiar attractiveness will characterize him, so that "the whole earth will wonder after him." Like Jesus Christ, he shall take upon him "the form of a man," for it is written, "he that hath understanding let him count the number of the beast, for it is the number of a man." Some believe he will be Judas Iscariot, who, by Christ himself was called "the son of perdition"; who, by three and a half years of experience,

is familiar with all the claims of the Son of God; who, by coming up out of the earth, or from the dead, would have occasion for his pretentions of divine power; and who, because he was a Jew, could lay claim to being the long expected One; and who, by signs and wonders, being in the employ of Satan, could deceive the very elect.

¶ But no matter who he is, remember that he is **a man,** filling up the office of the false prophet, leading his followers to worship the Antichrist, who is the dragon's first confederate in his contest for sovereignty of the earth. Add to this attractiveness the elements of destruction, the threat of death against all that refuse to follow him, and the cowardly of earth will join with this deceiver and go to make up his company.

¶ Many believers will perish in defense of their newly found faith, but a remnant of God's people will flee into the wilderness, as already presented, under the figure of the woman, and the earth will unite in the tribulation of the ages.

¶ It is a dark day when our young men go forth to battle, listening to the martial tread, the blast of the bugle, the command to march. We realize that wounds are ahead of them; but even that prospect is not without its pleasing features, for every good man hopes that out of such a conflict will come righteousness; through the suffering and slaughter of some, a great blessing will be accomplished for many others.

¶ And so we want to present

Some Features of the Final Conflict.

¶ In that day the **Dragon will face the Lamb.** It is a marvelous picture that after having presented this awful Dragon and his dreadful confederate—the Antichrist—

and the False Prophet—this trinity of iniquity that the world fears, then John goes on to say, "I saw, and behold the Lamb standing on the Mount Zion." But what is a Lamb against such power? What can this gentle domestic one do against the ferocity of these beasts of earth? Rather, what can He not do? He is "the Lion of the tribe of Judah," also! Gentle He is, yet the greatness of God is with Him; kindly, and yet the light from His face shall kindle a conflagration in which this whole hellish host shall find its doom. And God shall prove, in this end of the age, that He can, with the weak, confound the mighty.

¶ You remember the old story of Julian, the apostate, the tyrant and persecutor, and potentate of sorcery! You will remember that he had sold himself to the Devil, and put his officer, Mercurius, to death because of his constancy to the Christian faith. There is a tradition to the effect that when Julian led his army against the Persians, St. Basil the Great was favored with miraculous vision. He saw a woman of great beauty seated on a throne, and around her a great multitude of angels. She commanded one of them, saying, "Go, waken Mercurius, who sleepeth in a sepulchre, that he may slay Julian, the apostate, that brought blasphemy against me and against my son." In the battle next day, when the wicked Emperor was at the head of his army, an unknown warrior of plain face, mounted on a white charger, spurred forward and pierced Julian through the body, and then as suddenly vanished as if he had been an apparition. They carried Julian to his tent, and, putting his hands beneath the wound, he caught some of the blood that flowed from it, and flinging it into the air, he exclaimed with his

last breath, "Thou hast conquered; Galilean, thou hast conquered!"

¶ One day this greater apostate from the faith, Satan, himself, and his associates, the Antichrist and the False Prophet, shall be compelled to cry in similar speech to the Lamb, "Thou hast conquered! Thou hast conquered!"

¶ **That day the Deceived will face the Faithful.** For with the Lamb are "a hundred and forty and four thousand, having his name and the name of His Father written on their foreheads," and on their lips will be the song of redemption. Their characters will be spotless and undefiled, and in their mouths will be found no lie. It will be into the face of these that the faithless will be compelled to look. The author never reads the latter part of Matthew without feeling the great significance of that scene; and one of the chief sorows of those that shall be upon the left, when the Son of Man shall come in His glory, to divide men one from the other, will be facing the faithful; will be the view of that triumphant throng, that on His right hand will be answering His welcome, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."

¶ **That day Falsehood will be met by Truth.** The language of the false prophet will still be in the ears of men; the speech of the true will be set to note. For the faithful will sing as it were a new song before the throne and before the elders, viz., the song of Redemption. The cry of the False Prophet, which had bidden men to worship the Beast of Dragon appointment, will be met by the song of the saved, saying, "With a loud voice, Fear God and

give glory, for the hour of this judgment is come; and worship him that made heaven and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters."

¶ We have given all too little emphasis to the power of truth in this present age. If men only realized how potent it is against error, they would publish it the more. The author of "Quo Vadis" has a very fine touch in reporting Cleophas, who related how Jesus had been seen by himself and another; by Mary Magdalene, by his disciples, Thomas being absent, and after eight days, Thomas being present. And how Thomas fell at His feet and cried, "My Lord and my God." And Vinicius, listening, something wonderful took place in him; he forgot for the moment where he was. He began to lose the feeling of reality, of measure, of judgment. He stood in the presence of two impossibilities. He could not believe what the old man said, yet felt that he must be blind or lost to reason if he admitted that the man that said,"I saw," was lying, Oh, would God, that those of us that know the truth, and enjoy it, might, as Cleophas, tell men what we know, for in this final conflict the crisis for men's souls will depend upon truth.

THE ORDER OF MILLENNIAL EVENTS.

ABOUT the millennium there is supposed to be a deal of mystery. For much of this, Bible students may hold themselves responsible. There is more revealed regarding the millennium than the average Christian has examined, studied, and systematized.

¶ In order to the understanding of the twentieth chapter of Revelation—a portion of Scripture devoted entirely to the millennial program—one must be fairly familiar with the whole body of the inspired book. We agree with Mr. Justin Smith, in "The Complete Commentary," that there is a close connection between this chapter and that which precedes it, and that to deal with it as if it stood wholly by itself is a mistake. In fact, the only way to interpret any Scripture is in the light of all other Scriptures relating to that subject.

¶ Paul proscribed the way for the making of a good student and teacher of the Word, when to Timothy he writes: "Give diligence to present thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, handling aright the Word of Truth." The indifferent student of Scripture is likely to characterize the Apocalypse as "a book of fanciful figures," "phantasmagorical images," "unnatural combinations of types and symbols" to speak further of its "fervid and extravagant language" as one well-known writer has done.

¶ But the man that gives "diligence" to study—"hand-

ling aright the Word of truth"—will discover in it the plan of the ages; and in its twentieth chapter, the program of the millennium. It is an orderly presentation of the successive events that shall open, characterize, and close that glorious period."

The Redeemer Takes the Throne.

¶ The immediate steps essential to that supremacy are therein presented.

¶ **The translation of the saints**—"the sign of the Son of man in the heavens"—has already appeared. Since penning the chapter, upon the translation of the saints, we have received no small amount of literature from those that object to the idea that the Church will not pass through the tribulation. But the arguments of Tregelles and his confederates have not convinced us. Without unjustifiable repetition, we believe that when our Lord comes a second time, to find many slumbering and sleeping, the prepared virgins will go forth to meet Him (Matt. 25:6) in answer to His gracious call: "Come my people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee: hide thyself for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast. For, behold, Jehovah cometh forth out of his place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity: the earth also shall disclose her blood, and shall no more cover her slain" (Isa. 26:20-21).

¶ That this gathering then will involve the entire Church—existent at the moment—seems clear from the language of Paul: "For this we say unto you by the Word of the Lord, That we that are alive, that are left unto the coming of the Lord, shall in no wise precede them that are fallen asleep. The Lord Himself shall

descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God, and the dead in Christ shall rise first, then we that are alive, that are left shall together with them be caught up to meet the Lord in the air." We are compelled to consent with Gordon as he writes: "As Noah was hidden in the ark when the judgment of the flood came upon the earth; as the disciples, being forewarned by Christ, were sheltered in the hilltop of Pella, beyond Jordan, during the bloody siege in which Jerusalem perished, so shall it be with those who are accounted worthy to escape the judgments poured out upon apostate Christendom. They shall be wrapped away in a sheltering pavilion of cloud, and hidden in some angel-guarded retreat on high, where the apostle's word shall be fulfilled to them: 'And to you who are troubled, rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven, with His mighty angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God and obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ'" (2 Thess. 1:7, 8).

¶ **His descent from heaven will be the dethronement of the adversary.**

¶ "And I saw an angel coming down out of heaven, having the key of the abyss and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold on the dragon, the old serpent, which is the Devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years, and cast him into the abyss, and shut it, and sealed it over him, that he should deceive the nations no more, until the thousand years should be finished" (vs. 1-3).

¶ The dethronement of the dragon is essential to the enthronement of Deity. The Antichrist must give place to the Christ. The rulers that have "received their au-

thority from him" must turn about and yield their allegiance to the Lord of glory, that the promise of the Father may be fulfilled to the Son and the supremacy from "sea to sea, and from the rivers unto the ends of the earth" become His.

¶ The first step in the accomplishment of that conquest—the putting down of all opposing "rule and authority and power"—is the overthrow of the rebel of the centuries, the dragon of the pit. "The Prince of the power of the air" must be uncrowned by "the Prince of Peace"; and "the god of this age" must be unseated by "the Son of man," who is also "the Son of the Most High" God. This is the identical vision long ago vouchsafed to the prophet Daniel. He said, "I saw in the night visions; and lo, one like the Son of man, and He came even to the Ancient of Days, and they brought Him near before Him. And there was given Him dominion and glory, and a kingdom, that all the people, nations, and languages should serve Him."

¶ Students of Daniel cannot forget that before this glorious kingdom—represented by the stone cut out of the top of the mountain—fills the whole earth, it must be cast with mighty power against the image of the plain, demolishing the same—another figure of the great fact that Satan's overthrow, the absolute end of his supremacy, is the first essential to the introduction of the Redeemer's millennial reign.

¶ **The risen saints are to reign with Him.** The Second Coming will be the signal for the first resurrection—"they that are Christ's at His coming." Referring again to arguments already presented in favor of a first and second resurrection, separated by a thousand years,

we look into this text, "The rest of the dead lived not until the thousand years should be finished" and consent with Dean Alford, "If, in a passage where two resurrections are mentioned, where certain souls lived at the first, and the rest of the dead lived only at the end of a specified period, after the first—if in such a passage the first resurrection may be understood to mean spiritual rising with Christ, while the second means literal rising from the grave—then there is an end to significance in language, and Scripture is wiped out as a definite testimony to anything."

¶ They are raised not alone to the privileges of life—incorruptible and immortal, but to the exercise of power also, for they both "lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years."

¶ John saw not a single throne, but "thrones," and "they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them." Truly, as the great Nathaniel West once wrote: "Not only shall the twelve apostles sit on their thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel, and the martyrs of Jesus bear eminent rule, but the vast multitude of those who have fallen asleep in Christ, in all ages, shall wake to share the joy with those who are 'changed,' and enter the glorious kingdom of God,and live and reign with Christ a thousand years."

¶ This idea of reigning saints was not born of John while in the Isle of Patmos, as some that seek to set the testimony of the book of Revelation aside have been tempted to say. If one turn back to Matthew 19:28, he will find that Jesus Himself, while yet in the flesh, gave this very promise. The report is that "Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, that ye who have followed

me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit on the throne of His glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel."

¶ And, that there shall be offices of even lesser authority, exercised by other saints, in the millennial period, is evident. When He shall come with His kingdom, one that was especially faithful in the time of His absence, shall be set to rule over ten cities, and another that loyally exercised his lesser talents shall rule over five cities.

The Restoration of All Things.

¶ Six times over in this single twentieth chapter of Revelation, the phrase, "the thousand years," occurs; and yet, interpreted in the light of other Scriptures, it suggests vastly more than is herein stated, for it is "the Day of the Lord" known to the Old Testament, the glorious era of **God on the throne,** known to the New. Of it Peter was thinking when he wrote, "Repent ye, therefore, and turn again, that your sins may be blotted out, that so there may come seasons of refreshing from the presence of the Lord; and that He may send the Christ who hath been appointed for you, even Jesus: whom the heaven must receive until the times of restoration of all things, whereof God spake by the mouth of His holy prophets that have been from of old" (Acts 3:19-21).

¶ "The restoration of all things," whereof God spake by the mouth of his holy prophets, involves the millennial program. Nathaniel West, in a remarkably full discussion of "The Thousand Years in Both Testaments," makes mention of twenty-six characteristics of the millennial era. They are biblical every one, but we must

content ourselves with presenting a few of the more important ones.

¶ **It will involve the restoration of Jerusalem.** The very land on which the city is located will be "lifted high," and her crumbled walls shall come again in strength; and her scattered inhabitants shall again turn their feet into her gates: and the glory of the old Jerusalem shall be infinitely eclipsed by the splendor of Jerusalem renewed. "At that time they shall call Jerusalem the throne of Jehovah: and all the nations shall be gathered unto it, to the name of Jehovah, to Jerusalem" (Jer. 3:17). Through Zechariah, God said, "I will bring them, and they shall dwell in the midst of Jerusalem; and they shall be my people, and I will be their God, in truth and in righteousness" (8:8; and "All the land shall be made like the Arabah, from Geba to Rimmon south of Jerusalem; and she shall be lifted up and shall dwell in her place, from Benjamin's gate unto the place of the first gate, unto the corner gate, and from the tower of Hananel unto the king's winepresses, and men shall dwell therein, and there shall be no more curse; but Jerusalem shall dwell safely" (14:10, 11).

¶ **In it will be accomplished the conversion of Israel.** The eleventh chapter of Romans is devoted to the proposition—"God hath not cast away His people whom He foreknew." "There shall come out of Zion the Deliverer; He shall turn their ungodliness from Jacob." The revelation of the Lord from glory shall produce the long-looked-for repentance of God's ancient people, and when their "every eye shall see Him" and "them also that pierced Him," then "all the tribes of the earth shall mourn over Him." Then shall be fulfilled the prophecy,

"A nation shall be born in a day." That is the day in which "Jehovah will sprinkle clean water upon them, and they shall be clean from all their filthiness, and from all their idols; the day in which He shall put a new heart and a new spirit within them, and give them a heart of flesh, and put His Spirit within them, and cause them to walk in His statutes and keep His ordinances" (Ezek. 36:25-27). For did He not say by the pen of Jeremiah, "For as the girdle cleaveth to the loins of a man, so have I caused to cleave unto me the whole house of Israel and the whole house of Judah, saith Jehovah; that they may be unto me for a people, and for a name, and for a praise, and for a glory."

¶ **For it, God will rebuild the bodies of all saints.** "Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. Behold, I tell you a mystery; we all shall not sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. But when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory."

¶ God's buried believers will be brought forth to bodies "incorruptible"; and God's living children will be changed from bodies mortal to bodies "immortal," so that they shall no longer dwell in "natural bodies," but in "spiritual"; and "as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly."

The natural body is a body dependent upon the heart-beat. "Out of the heart are the issues of life." "The life is in the blood." "The natural body" is the body in which Jesus dwelt before His crucifixion, and which was subject to humiliation and death; "the spiritual body" is the body quickened and raised by the indwelling Spirit of God. It will be visible, as was the risen Christ; tangible, as was His form—"handle me and see": immortal, for death had "no more dominion over Him": independent of earthly limitations. Closed doors were not an obstacle to His entrance, and gravitation exercised no opposition to His ascent.

¶ In that day the bodies of the unregenerate, breathing the atmosphere of the new earth, "wherein dwelleth righteousness" (2 Pet. 3:13) shall be relieved from the easy ravages of "this present evil time," and "the child shall die at a hundred years old." In other words, an octogenarian will be an infant, and a centenarian a child. The entire removal of sorrow, tears and death is not promised for the millennial age, but is the peculiar glory of the kingdom when located in heaven. Truly, "the last enemy that shall be destroyed is Death." In the very nature of the case, the devil must be doomed before death ceases; and yet, as Nathaniel West contends, we nowhere read that God's people are to be subject to sin, sickness, and death in the glorious millennial era.

¶ **This restoration is to bless the very earth.** When sin entered the world a beast was made the instrument of the adversary; and a serpent—doubtless the most beautiful and intelligent of all lower creatures, winged and capable of conversation—fell to the lowest and most loathsome estate—being "cursed above all cattle and

above every beast of the field, and that upon its belly it was to go, and eat dust all the days of its life"; and enmity between the beast and the woman and her seed originated, so that man sought to bruise the serpent's head, and the serpent to strike the heel of the seed of woman.

¶ In the fall of man the earth found itself cursed with hatred and stained by the shedding of a brother's blood; the very ground came under the consequential curse—"Cursed is the ground for thy sake; in toil shalt thou eat it all the days of thy life; thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee."

¶ God's restoration will be as far-reaching as was the devil's curse. The brute creation will be restored to its pristine beauty, and all forms of animal life shall cease from battle and carnage, the very serpent itself included. "The wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the adder's den. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain; for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of Jehovah, as the waters cover the sea" (Isa. 11:6-8). Even of the serpent it is written, "The dust shall be the serpent's food, and they shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain, saith Jehovah."

¶ As to the ground when the first Adam sinned, "thorns and thistles" it brought forth; when the Second Adam shall come to His throne, "Instead of the thorn shall

come up the fir-tree; and instead of the briar shall come up the myrtle-tree, and it shall be to the Lord as a name, for an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off" (Isa. 55:11). "In that day the desert and the solitary place shall rejoice and blossom like the rose," and the remnant of beauty in which the world has raggedly clothed itself shall give place to a land so glorious as to be fit to receive the city soon to come "down out of heaven from God."

¶ In harmony with this recovery of brute life, and of the very face of the earth itself from the spirit and effects of sin, will be the new spirit imparted to man in the millennial age. "Out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of Jehovah from Jerusalem; and He will judge between many peoples, and will decide concerning strong nations afar off: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more." Not even that vestige of battle that marks contention between the few prospered and the many poor will remain to mar society, for "they shall sit every man under his vine and under his fig tree; and none shall make them afraid; for the mouth of Jehovah of hosts hath spoken it" (Micah 4:3-4).

The Millennium Ends.

¶ **It shall be ended in Satan's brief release.** After the thousand years have finished, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, and shall come forth to deceive the nations, that are in the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog!" We here employ the language of a post-millennialist as both apt and adequate, namely, that "the mil-

lennium, glorious and happy as it is, the period of it is not the final consummation and triumph of the kingdom of God. The loosing of Satan and the effects that follow it are preliminary to the final judgment." (Complete Commentary.)

¶ It is the plainest possible testimony to the fact that the sins of the world, involving all manner of deception and iniquity, are satanic in origin; and that when men are rid of his approaches and exempt from his power, they become faithful to God, and fraternal toward one another. But no sooner does this deceiver appear in their midst again than many, falling under his evil spell, are ready to rebel at once against both their Creator and their brethern, and out of the nations that are in the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, he will gather his dupes together to the war—the number of whom is as the sand of the sea. They will go up over the breadth of the land and compass about the camp of the saints of the beloved city. They will fight their last battle under demon leadership, to discover that his deception brought them to his doom, and the doom of his confederates—the beast, and the false prophets, by the lake of fire and brimstone, in which they shall be tormented day and night forever and ever.

¶ If one answer that this is a dark climax to God's millennial day, we answer, "All God's bright days end in night; but the night itself is the promise of another tomorrow." In this instance the tomorrow is to be a day brighter than even the millennium, as we shall see when we come to the study of "the kingdom under God the Father" (Rev. 21).

¶ Let it not be forgotten either that when the millen-

nium is introduced, Christ comes to His supremacy through suffering on the part of His own; but when the millennium ends, the true subjects of the King shall triumph! Not a one of them shall perish; nor is there even the hint that one of them shall suffer at Satan's hands. The battle has gone with the sons of God and all saints; and the battle has gone against Satan and all his associates, so that the coming of night affects only the children of darkness! For the children of light, the end of the millennium is the breaking of an everlasting day. ¶ That was Paul's thought when he wrote of Christ: "He must reign until He hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be abolished is death. For, He put all things in subjection under His feet. But when He saith, All things are put in subjection, it is evident that He is expected who did subject all things unto Him. And when all things have been subjected unto Him, then shall the Son also Himself be subjected to Him that did subject all things unto Him, that God may be all in all" (1 Cor. 15:25-28).

The Final Judgment.

¶ "And when I saw a great white throne, and Him that sat upon it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, the great and the small standing before the throne; and books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of the things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead that were in it; and death and Hades gave up the dead that were in them: and they were judged, every man according to their works. And death and Hades were cast

into the lake of fire. This is the second death, even the lake of fire. And if any was not written in the book of life, he was cast into the lake of fire" (vs. 11-15).

¶ **The subjects of the first resurrection will sit in this judgment.** They will not be there as the subjects of the same, but as associates with Christ in passing the sentence. Their judgment was overpassed in Calvary. In John 5:24 we read: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth Him that sent me, hath eternal life, and cometh not into judgment; but hath passed out of death into life." "Christ is the end of the law unto righteousness to every one that believeth" (Romans 10:4). That is why it could be written into this chapter, "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: over these the second death hath no power." But, as John continues, "They shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years," and as Jesus has aforetime told us, they shall sit with Him and judge.

¶ **The children of the millennium will come into judgment.** The twenty-fifth chapter of Matthew pictures their part in the same. "When the Son of man shall come in His glory, and all the angels with Him, then shall He sit on the throne of His glory: and before Him shall be gathered all the nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as the shepherd separateth the sheep from the goats; and He shall set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on the left. Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: for I was hungry, and ye gave me drink; I was a stranger, and ye took me in;

naked, and ye clothed me; I was sick, and ye visited me; I was in prison, and ye came unto me. Then shall the righteous answer Him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee hungry, and fed thee? or thristy, and gave thee drink? And when saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked and clothed thee? And when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee? And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily, I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it unto one of these my brethren, even these least, ye did it unto me. Then shall He say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into the eternal fire which is prepared for the devil and his angels: for I was hungry, and ye did not give me to eat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me not in; naked, and ye clothed me not; sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not. Then shall they also answer, saying, Lord, when saw we thee hungry, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee? Then shall He answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it not unto one of these least, ye did it not unto me. And these shall go away into eternal punishment: but the righteous into eternal life (vs. 31-46).

¶ Many pre-millennialists have been led, as we believe, into a misinterpretation here, simply because God does not, on every page in Scripture, put forth the full program of the ages. They have thought that this assembling of the nations to receive the sentence of judgment, at the lips of Jesus, occurred immediately upon the coming of Christ to His throne because of what is written into Matthew 25:31. But why should we insist that there is no lapse of time between His appearance here and this

separating of men to the right and to the left? As a great teacher has contended, there are many instances in Scripture in which the juxtaposition of sentences do not involve a kindred closeness of the events mentioned. For instance, in reading Isaiah's words concerning the Messiah, "To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord and the day of vengeance of our God," who would have imagined that in this single sentence two grand and distinct areas were brought together and spoken of—the era of grace and the era of judgment. But the Lord, by His penetrating exegesis, cleft the passage asunder, and breaking off in the middle of a sentence—"to preach the acceptable year of the Lord"—He closed the book and sat down, saying, "This day is this Scripture fulfilled in your ears." Two thousand years have already gone by and the latter part of the passage still awaits its application.

¶ A comparison of Scripture with Scripture will show that the judgment of Matthew 25:31-46 does not precede the millennium. It has the same essential features that enter into Revelation 20:11-15; and there is a harmony between the Gospel and the Apocalypse. When the Son of man in all His glory, with all His holy angels, sits upon the throne for His last judgment, then, and not till then, shall the sheep be divided from the goats, the one taken to the kingdom and the other turned away into eternal punishment. But the order of the judgment is against the children of the millennium—or the living rebels first; and later, against the unbelieving dead, raised to receive their sentence. It is perfectly evident that there are living rebels or else Satan could not find a following at the end of the millennial period; and we are

told that his following there is to have exactly the same fate as that meted out to those that are raised to hear judgment pronounced.

¶ The children of the millennium are the only people that can be justly judged on the basis of their works, whether they are good or bad! All others stand or fall according to faith or unbelief; but these, having lived all their lives in the presence of the living God, faith will have given place to sight, and works alone will remain to test the true and to prove the false. The true, having been regenerated and having been "changed from mortal to immortal," enjoy the same glorious reward accorded to the raised ones; who were "changed from the corruptible to the incorruptible." The false having been unregenerate, will meet the same sentence as that meted out to their rebel brethren that have slept in their graves, "for the dead, the great and the small," are to stand before the throne, and "the books will be opened, and another book will be opened, which is the book of life, and the dead will be judged out of the things which are written in the books, according to their works. The sea shall give up its dead, and death and hell will give up the dead that are in them, and they will be judged every man according to his works." The man that is without faith can only work the works of the flesh, and the works of the flesh are these: "Fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousies, wraths, factions, divisions, parties, envyings, drunkenness, revellings, and such like; of which I forewarn you, even as I did forewarn you, that they who practice such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God (Gal. 5:19-21). These are the very works found

characterizing the company excluded from heaven in Rev. 21.

¶ If it is complained that this is a dark presentation of the millennium, let it be understood that this is no presentation of the millennium at all. It is the biblical event that closes it. That glorious era is not herein described, but as we have remarked, it is parenthesized. A man's birth is the hour of awful travail; and a man's death the moment of breaking hearts and agonizing spirits; but these do not mean that the man's spirit may not have been as great as that of the apostle Paul, his conquests more multitudinous than those of an Alexander, and his life as sweet and happy as that of John the apostle.

¶ The millennial age is the partial glory. The perfect glory comes with "the new heaven and the new earth," our God in the midst!

THE KINGDOM OF GOD IN HEAVEN.

Revelation 21:1-27.

PAUL, in writing to the Corinthians tells them that when Christ "shall have abolished all rule and all authority," and "put all enemies under His feet," "then He shall deliver up the Kingdom to God, even the Father, that God may be all in all." The Millennial Kingdom on earth—complete at the end of a thousand years—is to be succeeded by the Kingdom of God "in Heaven." The same earth that crowned Christ with thorns and crucified Him on Calvary will be compelled to "crown Him Lord of all," and for a thousand years acknowledge His complete supremacy. The Father who gave Him to earth, to contest with Satan its supremacy, will one day receive from His conquering hand the Kingdom accomplished, and forever set it in the heavenlies.

¶ It is particularly popular in our day to speak of Heaven as a subject altogether beyond the reach of man's mind, and to treat it as if our revelation regarding the same was so incomplete that to declare any philosophy of Heaven is to deal in nothing better than fanciful dreams. John Watson, in "The Mind of the Master" says, "Were it possible to place the fool's cap on one of our most sublime ideas and turn immortality itself into an asurdity, it is done when a vulgar imagination has peddled with the

details of the future, and has accomplished a travesty of the Revelation of St. John. . . . Within a limited range science and philosophy are prophets on the unseen, but at a point they leave us, and we stand alone, fascinated, before the veil. No one has come from the other side and spoken with authority save Jesus."

¶ Without reference to the intended strictures of Watson upon those that believe in the literal acceptance of much of the Revelation, let it be remembered that in the last sentence of this quotation from him we find a complete warrant for our study. True, no one has come from the other side and spoken with authority "save Jesus"; but it is equally true that He is the one whose words all students of Revelation are studying. The Apocalypse opens with this sentence: "The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave him to show unto his servants."

¶ What Jesus has to say of Heaven is not to be despised by those that would be His true followers, nor neglected in the study of those that would understand the goal to which the Son of God, through the whole millennial period is moving.

¶ The twenty-first chapter of the Revelation is what the Son of Man has to say upon finalities; and it involves the Kingdom of Heaven on Earth: the Capital City in Heaven and the Inhabitants Above and Below.

The Kingdom of Heaven on Earth.

¶ "And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth are passed away; and the sea is no more" (21:1). This brief statement, studied in the light of other Scripture, is wonderfully comprehensive. It compasses Heaven, Earth and Sea.

¶ **The present heaven is to be purified.** Evidently the

word "heaven" as here employed, does not refer to that spiritual state for which the saints of God are set, but rather to the first heaven, or the upper atmosphere. With the same fires by which the earth is to be refined this heaven is to be cleansed (Matt. 5:18). We doubt not that Dr. Seiss is justified in describing it as thereafter a "heaven which will no more robe itself in angry tempests, nor blackness; neither flash with the thunder bolts of wrath, nor cast forth plagues of hail, nor rain down fiery judgment." We believe also that the explanation of these physical improvements is found in a further suggestion of the same author—viz. "It will no longer give lurking place to the devil and his angels." At present Satan is "the prince of the power of the air." On Scripture authority it seems that he has access not alone to the heavens, but into the very presence of God, and that he enjoys the dear delight of bringing railing accusation against God's people, and visiting upon the earth every curse of which his cunning and power are capable. But it will be remembered, among the visions of John, there was witnessed war in heaven, "Michael and his angels going forth to war with the dragon,and the dragon warred, and his angels; and they prevailed not, neither was there found place for the same in heaven. And the great dragon was cast down, the old serpent, he that is called the devil and satan, the deceiver of the whole world, he was cast down to the earth, and his angels were cast down with him." Then it was that "The Heavens and all they that dwell in them were called upon to rejoice."

¶ If the new earth will be complete when Satan is driven from it, and the Father's reign is without a rival,

so the new heavens are accomplished by the archangel's conquest and the banishment forever from them of the adversary of God and men. Such a heaven will be a fit and glorious canopy for the earth renewed in righteousness.

¶ **The present earth is destined to perish.** Jesus often spoke of the fact that Heaven and earth would pass away. (See Matthew 5:18, March 13:3 and Luke 21:33). Peter, in his second epistle (3:7-14), says, "The heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men. . . . The day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat; the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. . . . Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness."

¶ But let it be understood that when we employ the word "perish" we do not mean "annihilation." The Greek term compassing this thought simply suggests "great changes" and involves a "regeneration" rather than an extinction. The same apostle—Peter—speaking of Noah's day, says, "The world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished" (2 Peter 3:6). But it did not become extinct!

¶ It is doubtful whether either science properly understood, or Scripture properly interpreted, admits of the annihilation of anything; but they both recognize such changes in form as mean the passing of the old and the introduction of the new. The writer of Ecclesiastes,

therefore, was not mistaken when he said, "One generation goeth and another generation cometh, but the earth abideth forever," neither was the Psalmist creating a theological conflict when he said, "Thou hast established the earth, and it abideth forever." The regenerated man "puts off the old man, with his doing, and puts on the new man, that is renewed unto knowledge, after the image of Him that created him." With him, "old things pass away, and all things become new," yet he retains the same body! Paradoxical as it may seem, he is the same man; yet another man—a renewed man.

¶ So there shall be "a new earth," and the righteous shall dwell in it forever. (See Psalms 37:29). "Redemption" means "recovery," and that recovery will be complete. Originally the earth rejected God the Father; and later, it crucified Christ the Son. In its millennial age it will crown Christ Lord of all; and for its eternal future it will re-enthrone the Father. Certain writers have attempted both to imagine and depict the glories of this globe when it shall come again under the benignant reign of God; but we confess to the failure of Milton, and are fully persuaded that no language can present to the human mind our "Paradise Regained" with "God in all and over all."

¶ **The sea of our present knowledge shall also pass.** The statement of the Apocalyptic writer is "And the sea is no more." Four interpretations have been put upon this phrase, with the preponderance of biblical testimony in favor of the fourth.

¶ The first is that of such clerical skeptics as Reginald Campbell, who so far as it is an authority at all with them, see in it a mere suggestion of the removal of social

barriers and the bringing of the nations of the earth into a common brotherhood.

¶ The second, accepted by many lovers of Scripture, insists that the language involves annihilation, and that in the good providence of God, the vast spaces now occupied by the oceans, or the sea (for all the waters of the world are in one bed) wasting as they do three-fourths of the surface of the globe, will be removed in that age in which the presence of God will not only mean light, but impart life; so that the monster that has wrecked the mightiest vessels will sweep the earth with storms no more, and the people that have been divided by her waves shall be brought into constant contact, and their affections will be cemented forever.

¶ The third company of interpreters look upon this language as they do upon most of that found in this wonderful volume, as merely suggestive and symbolical. Robert Stuart McArthur has well voiced them by saying of this phrase: "Today the sea is not thought of as a line of separation, for now it is the highway of nations. Now on its surface go the great ships; and far down in its bed lies the cable which makes the world a whispering gallery. But still on earth separations exist. It often places us on the earth at great distances from our friends; and then there is the sea lying between time and eternity which our frinds cannot cross to come to us, nor we, when in life, to go to them. Although we listen ever so intently, we cannot hear their voices; although we wait there so patiently, we cannot see their forms. The cold, dark sea rolls between us and them. There is no cable at its bottom; there is no ship on its surface. Thank God, the day is coming when 'there shall be no more

sea!'" To him, and to all those agreeing with him, the reference is evidently to the day when God's people, gathered in Heaven, shall enjoy a brotherhood from which every barrier has been removed, the blessed association which knows no separations whatever.

¶ But to us, the fourth suggestion is most in accord with the Word of God,—namely that the sea is to undergo a kindred change to that which is to be accomplished in the heaven and in the earth. Those characteristics that have made it the cruel monster most feared of men, are forever to pass. In its depths war will be no more; the larger shall not feed upon the less; the peace akin to that which characterizes both heaven and earth will settle upon the sea also! Its rippling surface will no longer know the destroying storm, but be vivified and beautified by ambrosial breezes, and men shall no longer sink and strangle in the same and lie dead on its sandy depths, but shall travel it with as great ease as Christ walked the waters of Gennesaret. This, of course, must be true, since our risen bodies will not be subject to the law of gravitation nor subject to death at all. In the beginning of God's creative acts it is written, "In six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is" (Ex. 20:11). Unquestionably each of them was affected by the fall. Sin stained the heavens, scarred the earth, and made the sea sanguinary. But the time is coming when "every created thing which is in the heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and on the sea, and all things that are in them, will be saying, Unto Him that sitteth on the throne, and unto the Lamb, be the blessing and the honor, and the glory and the dominion forever and ever" (Rev. 5:13).

The Capital City From Heaven.

¶ "And I saw the Holy City, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, made ready as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God."

¶ We shall not pause to debate the qeustion whether this city is real, or whether this language is merely symbolical. That will not be determined by the arguments of men skilled in the oratorical art. Of Abraham we are told that "He looked for a city which hath the foundations, whose builder and maker is God" (Heb. 11:10). Paul declared of all saints "God hath prepared for them a city" (Heb. 11:16). To his disciples Jesus said, "I go to prepare a place for you" (John 14:2). "We know that here we have no continuing city, but we seek one to come" (Heb. 13:14). And we have the promise to believers that they are to "come unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem" (Heb. 12:22).

¶ It will be ours, therefore, to search further the sacred Scriptures to find out what we may regarding this—our glorious future home.

¶ To three or four facts these few phrases call attention.

¶ **It is now in the process of preparation.** "I, John, saw the Holy City, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, made ready as a bride adorned for her husband." No true and capable bride presents herself to the groom until skilled hands have prepared her for that hour and appearance; and we shall not see this city,

that is the bride of our Beloved, until she is "made ready" for the revelation.

¶ Advocates of the great and glorious truth of the second coming of Christ sometimes grow impatient at His delay. Paul warned them that they would, and urged them to "wait patiently." This they can well afford to do when they remembered the work that now engages His hand and heart. He has not only gone "to receive for himself a kingdom and to return," but He has gone also "to prepare a place" for His own. If with a single word He can make a world so great and glorious as to astonish angels and men, and, with a twist of his arm, fling it into space to go traveling on millenniums after millenniums, who can imagine the City that requires of His thought and endeavor two thousand years, and we know not how much more? Truly it will be made ready, for "its builder and maker is God" (Heb. 11:10).

¶ **Its descent is prophetically described:** "I saw the Holy City, the New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God." What its pedestal shall be we are not specifically informed. The New Jerusalem of the millennial period is to be "exalted over the hills" (Isa. 2:2); and the Eternal City of the saints' residence is spoken of as "Jerusalem which is above" (Gal. 4:26). If the law of gravity is not to control our risen bodies, neither may it be a factor in the future location of their dwelling place. The Lord who "hangeth the world on nothing" can sustain the New Jerusalem at any place of divine appointment. Then if it be above the earth, the light and glory from its open gates falling full upon the same, it may be to the "new earth" what the "New Jerusalem" on the mountains is to the millennial age. John does de-

clare distinctly "The nations shall walk in the midst of the light thereof, and the kings of the earth shall bring their glory into it; the gates thereof shall no wise be shut by day, and there shall be no night there; and they shall bring the glory and the honor of the nations into it."

¶ **Its form and dimensions are made definite.** There are those who reject a literal interpretation here, assigning as a reason that such a city would be too small to receive the saved of the past centuries, not to speak of the redeemed nations of the earth that are "to go in and out" at their pleasure. But such have either misinterpreted the Scriptures or have proven themselves poor at calculation. Who can conceive even the meaning of a city twelve thousand furlongs in length and breadth, with the height equal to the length and breadth thereof? A writer amazes his readers by his neat calculations and his comparisons: "Great," says he, "was the city of Nineveh; so great that Jonah had only begun to enter it after a day's journey. But it could be measured by four hundred stadia. What shall we say of a city that is twelve thousand stadia in each dimension—1500 miles in length, the same in breadth and height? Of it the author has written, "Its every street will be one-fifth the length of the diameter of the earth; and the number of its avenues, although a mile apart, will not be less than eight millions." No wonder the same writer exclaims "Stupendous magnitude!" But we refrain and join with the poet in crying:

O, Mother, dear Jerusalem,
When shall I come to thee?
Then shall my sorrows have an end,
When I thy joys shall see."

The Inhabitants Above and Below.

¶ We employ the phrase, "Inhabitants above and below" with intent. It seems fairly clear from this entire twenty-first chapter, studied as it ought to be in the light of other revelation, that both "the new heaven" and the "new earth" are to be the inheritance of the saints for all ages.

¶ **The earth is not to be depopulated and abandoned.** The arguments for "the on-going of the race" are neither insignificant nor unscriptural. "The generation of the ages of the ages" (Eph. 3:21) is the New Testament description of the unceasing generations promised by the Old. (See Genesis 8:22 and 23 and 9:8-16). Not a few of us, while yet holding to the idea that the earth would be eventually destroyed, and Heaven would hold all the people of God, wondered at the words of the Lord such as found in Joel 3:20: "But Judah shall abide forever, and Jerusalem from generation to generation," and at Ezekiel 37:25-27, involving as it does the promise of an "everlasting covenant," with Israel that they shall be "unceasingly multiplied," with God the Father tabernacling in their midst. But if the generations are to continue from age to age, forever, then we marvel at these words no more!

¶ But human speech is limited, and if we consent with this Book itself that Jesus was its Author, we must still remind ourselves that He could not tell us all about the saints' home. Human language is not adequate to the task. But even within its limitations what wonders has He wrought! There arises before the believer's eyes this matchless City, the wide and shining House of God; the symbol of which is golden streets, and, of its walls and

gates, all manner of precious stones; the light of which is the Father's face; the life of which is in fountain and river; the health and beauty of which are in heavenly and never failing trees; the fellowships of which are marked by no cowardice, sorcery, murder, polluation, or idolatry; the song of which is never hushed! There, not a tear shall stain the face; not a death shall sadden the heart; there, no mourning shall ever be known, nor crying heard, nor pain endured, for the "first things are passed away"; and the One who sits on the throne, hath made "all things new," and it is His House, and they are His children, blessed forever more! As the prophet, speaking for Jehovah, says "The heaven is my throne but the earth the footstool of my feet" (Act 7:49). This Celestial City is the capitol of God's Kingdom—the city of all saints; the ends of the earth will be their inheritance and eternal felicity their portion.

¶ At the conclusion of a discourse on the Millennial Reign an auditor remarked, "I never before had a true vision of life, nor was I ever made to feel that my life was of such infinite reach, nor so well worth the living!" But here is a prospect bigger still—infinite in its sweep, unthinkable in its experience of joy, eternal in its duration. If the inhabitants of earth by faith can only get a glimpse of it, the very glimpse ought to affect regeneration, if indeed it be true that "the goodness of God leadeth one to repentance." And more than a glimpse we could not have and live, such are the limitations of this life. The light from that world must not break upon us until the same God who hath prepared our inheritance, hath also prepared us for it. That is why the poet hath said:

"We may not know how sweet its balmy air,
How bright and fair its flowers;
We may not hear the songs that echo there,
Through these enchanted bowers.

The city's shining towers we may not see
With our dim earthly vision,
For Death, the silent warder, keeps the key
That opens the gates Elysian.

But sometimes when adown the western sky
A fiery sunset lingers,
Its golden gate swings inward noiselessly,
Unlocked by unseen fingers.

And while they stand a moment, half ajar,
Gleams from the inner glory
Stream brightly through the azure vault afar,
And half reveal the story."

THE HISTORICAL MINISTRY OF PRE-MILLENNIARIANISM.

THE words of Jesus, "This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations, and then shall the end come," involved the main facts of premillennarianism. They identified the present age with the dispensation of the Church; they suggested the mighty changes that are to come over the earth at the end of this age, when the Church shall have completed its witness, when the Master shall have returned and the Millennium shall have come!

¶ Christ employed language with precision. When He said, "This gospel of the kingdom," He did not mean "This gospel of grace" or "This gospel of personal salvation," but He meant what He said. There is a "Kingdom Gospel"—Premillennarianism.

¶ What about its historical ministry? There are two tests to which theological facts and fictions should alike be subjected that the one may be distinguished from the other—the latter rejected and the former retained. The first is the test of Biblical teaching, "To the law and to the testimony; if it speaks not according to this word," reject it. The second is the test of personal experience, or practical Christianity. If it bless not the individual, if it aid not the church, if it honor not Christ, then it is not of God. The former of these has received

sufficient emphasis in the foregoing chapters. The event predicted by Old Testament prophecies, anticipated by New Testament apostles, and denominated by the peerless Paul as "that blessed hope," has played so conspicuous a part in the roll of human history that thoughtful men ought to be able to trace its course and determine with fair accuracy whether it has wrought benediction or bane for the Church of God.

¶ Along several lines we propose to push that inquiry! Let us inquire first, after

THE APOSTOLIC FAITH.

¶ Concerning this point let us not be misunderstood. When we employ the phrase "apostolic faith" we do not intend to trace the history of Premillennarianism from the days of New Testament apostles only. The truth is that the New Testament apostles originated no faith; they accepted, confirmed, elaborated and propagated Old Testament revelations. Paul's statement in 1 Cor. 15:3, "I delivered unto you first of all, that which I also received" might justly be accepted as the law of New Testament revelation. The shadows, types, suggestions and prophecies of the Old flower into New Testament Scriptures. Premillennarianism was not even born with Jesus of Nazareth, much less with Paul or Peter or John. As Haldeman justly says of the Old Testament, "The moment we open these Scriptures we find an anticipated picture of the Second Coming in Adam, exalted to headship, dominion, glory and power, as the 'figure of Him who was to come.' Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesies that the Lord is coming in glory. Abraham catches glimpses of Him as the coming man and re-

joices in view of His day. Jacob has a vision of the Epiphany and splendor, when, surrounded by the angelic host, the Lord God looks down from the height of the golden ladder. Moses sees that revelation of Him in the burning bush, not as the weak and crucified, but as **Yaveh,** the Coming One, coming in triumph. The Psalms are full of the one utterance, His coming, and they portray the movement in heaven when the whole universe shall be attuned in rhythm to the music of His kingly descent. Isaiah spells it out in the notes of seraphic splendor and in the announcement of earth's response from exalted mountain, shivering earth and tossing seas. Jeremiah depicts the moment when, at His Coming, Jerusalem shall no longer be as the forsaken, who binds her hair with the braid of widowhood; but as Jerusalem the holy, Jerusalem whose name shall be the Lord our Righteousness, and unto whom shall be gathered the nations, as unto the throne of the Lord. Ezekiel beholds His coming in the chariots of cherubic glory. Daniel sets Him forth in the center of ten thousand times ten thousands of shining angels, coming to take unto Himself the crowns of all the kings of the earth, as King of kings and Lord of lords. The minor prophets, on every page, proclaim that He is coming. Hosea declares it in language of rebuke to the people that have denied Him; Joel in speech that makes the tongue to burn and the ears to tingle, while Habakkuk rises to the heights of sublimity in a diction unequalled, as he testifies of the God who shall come from Teman and the Holy One who shall cover the heavens with His glory, who shall fill the earth with His praise, before whose feet shall go the pestilence and burning coals, who shall

stand and measure the earth, drive asunder the nations, scatter the everlasting mountains, receive the homage of the perpetual hills as they bow before Him and acknowledge that His ways are everlasting, and who shall fill the earth, the whole earth, with the glory of His presence. The last utterance of the Old Testament, as it is of the New, is that He is Coming."

¶ This Old Testament teaching had a three-fold confirmation in the New Testament Scriptures, and was, therefore, made to be "the apostolic faith."

¶ **It was affirmed by the Master, Jesus Christ.** He addressed himself to this theme more often than He laid His tongue to any other. We shall not repeat the many detached texts that dropped from His lips, but call attention to the fact that certain whole chapters, recording His words, relate themselves to this subject; as, for instance, the eight kingdom parables that make up the whole of Matthew thirteen, and the multitude of references that well nigh cover the entire twenty-third, twenty-fourth and twenty-fifth chapters of the same Gospel.

¶ In the first of these (23d) He prophesies His return; in the second (24th) He declares the conditions that will suggest its imminence; and in the third (or 25th) He illustrates the results upon believers and unbelievers alike. Truly Jesus Himself best understood the time, circumstances, and effects of the day when "the Son of man shall come in His glory and all the holy angels with him," and His declarations determine "the apostolic faith."

¶ **The writings of the apostolic college confirmed it.** There can be no dispute as to the Millennarianism of Paul

and Peter and John. Phillips Brooks was not clearly a premillennialist, and yet, as an honest man speaking of the text, "The Lord is at hand" (Phil. 4:4), he declared "There were times when, as it seemed, the apostles looked to see the opening skies and the descending chariot. . . . They found abundant clearness and abundant inspiration in their expectancy when they described the thing they expected as 'the coming of the Lord.' Every step they took in life brought them a little nearer to that great end and purpose. They set out on a voyage, and as they turned their eyes away from the fading shore and looked across the broad waters, they seemed to be sailing out to meet the coming Lord."

¶ John hoped for perfect victory against sin only when Christ should appear (1 John 3:2-3). Peter sighed in spirit when he saw the day in which certain scoffers should arise, saying, "Where is the promise of His coming," as if God were slack concerning His promise, and remarked, as with heaviness of heart, "But the day of the Lord will come as a thief" and in view of it, it is our business to be "looking for and hastening" the same, that we may be prepared for the "new heaven and new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness" (2 Pet. 3:4, 9, 11). Paul never penned an epistle without introducing the appeal of "that great day," as the sufficient incentive to the holiest walk and the highest accomplishment.

¶ **It was the faith of the early church Fathers.** Guinness remarks "It cannot be denied that for three centuries the Church held the doctrine of the premillennial coming of Christ," and added, "I think I have gone

through all the writings of the Fathers for three centuries pretty carefully, and I do not know an exception, unless it be Origen," the one early writer who was often heterodox. It was the faith of Justin Martyr, Irenaeus, Tertullian, Methodius and Victorinus. Dorner adds to these Barnabas, Clement, Hermas, Ignatius, Polycarp, Papias, Nepos, Lactantius and others, and adds, "All were at one." Dr. James H. Brookes reminds us that "the premillennial advent was the common heritage of both Jewish and Gentile Christians, and passed from the Jewish Christian to the Gentile Christian Church precisely in the way the Gospel passed. It was as fragrant at Antioch as at Jerusalem, at Rome as at Ephesus. History has no concensus more unanimous for any doctrine than is the concensus of the apostolic Fathers for the premillennial advent of Christ."

¶ If men will take history rather than undertake to make history, premillennarianism will be conceded to have been the apostolic faith. Certainly Mosheim is a historian not to be despised, and in Volume I, page 89, he says, "The prevailing opinion that Christ was to come and reign a thousand years among men before the final dissolution of the world, had met with no opposition previous to the time of Origen," while such writers as Gieseler, Stackhouse, Bishops Newton and Russell, and even the disinterested Gibbon, render an approving testimony.

¶ But we have already called attention to the fact that the second test to which men have a right to subject this faith, is important, namely the test of

THE SPIRITUAL EFFECT.

¶ This test may find adequate expression in three lines of study.

¶ 1. **Its effect upon the study of the Sacred Scriptures.** That the advocates of the imminent coming of Christ have been the great students of God's Word, few men would dispute. What is the explanation? Has not Dr. A. B. Simpson given it in an illustration? He tells his readers of having visited a cathedral in Europe, upon the ceiling of which the most famous painter of past centuries had patiently employed his brush. Upon entering the building his eyes sought the ceiling and he saw what seemed a bewildering color of incoherent daubing. He looked long and earnestly; not a figure appeared; not a design was evident. The old sexton was passing about and the visitor expressed to him his disappointment, whereupon he smiled and said: "No wonder, sir. You have no fit position from which to see this work of art. Come with me!" And he led him to a place in the cathedral where the artist of all centuries had evidently stood, and bethought his designs, and to which he had returned again and again as he wrought them into being. And lo, the visitor saw such a masterpiece as to bedim his eyes with tears, and bow his head in gratitude to the God who had granted to one of His fellow-servants such genius. And Simpson reasons, What that position was to the study of the fresco painting, the premillennial position is to the understanding of the Word of God. It was the position of Ellicott, Tregelles, Godet, Stier, Delitzch, Lange, Olshausen, DeWette, Meyer, Jamiesen, Faucett, Schall, Bengel, Canon Ryle; it was the position of Calvin, Zwingle, Melancthon,

Luther, Knox, and the Wesleys. It was the position of John Bunyan, Cranmer, Latimer, and Ridley. It was the position of Candlish and Guthrie, of Robert Hall and Thomas Chalmers, Andrew and Horatius Bonar, Nathaniel West, Murray McCheyne and Adolph Saphir; of Gaussen, Van Oostersee, Auberlen, Baumgarten; of Hoffman, Stockmeyer, Lange and Shenkel. It was the position of Spurgeon, and Moody, and Brooks, and Moorehead, and Gordon, and Blackstone; of Pierson and Penn; and is that of Meyer and Morgan; of Munhall and Chapman; of Haldeman and Dixon; of Torrey and Schofield. In the language of Paul to the Hebrews, "What shall I say more; the time would fail me to tell of" Craven, Patterson, Erdman and Dunwiddy; of Maitlands, Birkes, Bickersteth and Brock; of McNeile and the McNeals; of McIllvaine and Henshaw, and Nicholson and Hastings; of the Robertsons—Frederick W. and John; of Herr Saunders and Harris and Evans and Stifler, and Lorimer and Peters, and Durbin and Parker and Gilbert and Foster and Lummis, not to make mention of those men so well-known to us that we do not yet appreciate their greatness, Frederick W. Farr, A. J. Frost, Len G. Broughton, W. B. Hinson, George Robert Cairns, and others too numerous to mention, all of whom have obtained a good testimony in their proclamation of "the faith once for all delivered to the saints."

¶ Massillon is quoted as having said "that in the days of primitive Christianity it would have been deemed a kind of apostacy not to sigh for the return of the Lord." "Strange it is," remarks A. J. Gordon, " that we have reached an age where it is counted an eccentricity to

love His appearance and a theological error to cry with the best-loved apostles, "Even so, come Lord Jesus." And yet those men before whose eyes the Scriptures have unfolded with the greatest beauty, and whose hearts have drunk most deeply from their fountains of truth, not only join in that cry, but unite their voices in proclaiming His coming as the consummation of the age, the goal of the Church—the crowning of Christ Himself —the only hope of the world's redemption.

¶ 2. Its effect in the deepening of the spiritual life. These are days when this is a theme much discussed. Many of the speakers of recent great Christian assemblies have been sounding the "deepening of the spiritual life," as the all essential note. But not all of them have seen the Scriptural connection, or even the historical evidences, that the doctrine of "the Second Coming of Christ" relates itself to the deepening of the spiritual life as cause to effect! "Sobriety" of thought is natural to those that know perfectly that "the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night." "The preservation of one's whole spirit, soul, and body" in "blamelessness," is attempted by those that look for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. "Every man that hath this hope set on him purifieth himself, even as he is pure."

¶ Holy conversation and godliness must characterize those that are truly "looking for and hastening the coming of our Lord." The denial "of ungodliness and worldly lusts" belongs also to those that understand "that blessed hope of the glorious appearing of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ." As to "watchfulness and prayer," it is natural to those that know not what hour their Lord doth come, but understand that it will be in a

moment when they think not! Utter faithfulness is the natural result from the gospel notion, "the Lord is at hand."

¶ The one reason why the Church is flirting with the world, and even playing the harlot, is because she has put out of her mind the expectation of her husband's speedy return. Gordon says, "There is a tradition that Michael Angelo, by his prolonged and unremitting toil upon the frescoed domes which he wrought, acquired such a habitual upturn of the countenance, that, as he walked the streets, strangers would observe his bearing, and set him down as some visionary or eccentric." And Gordon says, "It is well if we who profess to be Christians of the apostolic school, had our conversation so truly in heaven and our faces so steadfastly set thitherward, that sometimes the 'man with the muck-rake' should be led to wonder at us, and to look up with questioning surprise from his delving for earthly gold and glory."

¶ The men of Galilee that saw Jesus ascend had this upward look, and it saved them from "the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life"; it changed the law of gravitation, which is commonly of the earth, and pulls earthward, and set its tendency upward, illustrating a principle in physics, drawing their affections out toward the greater Star—the Star of Bethlehem, and converting them into men that were "in the world yet not of it"; that could walk its dusty paths and speak with its stained people and yet keep themselves unspotted.

¶ **Its effects upon the discharge of practical duties.** One of the strange arguments brought against premil-

lenarianism is that it renders its advocates unfit for practical duties. This argument is neither sustained by the Bible nor by human history. Certainly "sobriety" is a practical duty, and we are enjoined to that, knowing that "the day of the Lord cometh as a thief." Certainly "patience" is a practical duty, and we are commanded to exercise it "for a little while,"knowing that "He that shall come will come and will not tarry." Certainly "brotherly love" is a practical duty. Our Lord asks that we increase and abound in love one toward another, and toward all men, that we may be unblameable at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." Certainly "watchfulness" is a practical duty, and we are to watch, not knowing at what hour the Lord doth come. Certainly energetic service is a practical duty and we are to render that lest He find us idle at his coming, and utter our condemnation.

¶ There is one thing that will not be denied, even our opponents themselves being the witnesses, namely, that the men that held this hope, have so far discharged their obligation to God as to have promoted the interests of His church by personal service, by money sacrifice, by missionary zeal, by intelligent counsel, by tireless work, so as not to have been surpassed by any people that have ever named His name, or joined their fortunes to His cause.

¶ This leads us to our last suggestion.

The Supreme Appeal.

¶ **To holy living!** Bishop Brooks declares that ever since the time of the apostles, the coming of the Lord has been the inspiration of the Christian world, and truly

remarks, "The power of any life lies in its expectancy." Paul could "fight a good fight, finish his course; keep the faith" at any cost, because he knew there was laid up for him "a crown of rejoicing which the Lord, the righteous Judge, should give to him at that day; and not to him only, but also unto all them that love His appearing."

¶ **To high endeavor!** It is not an accident that Carey who undertook winning India; that Taylor, the answer to whose faith is light for Asia and Africa alike; that Grattan Guinness, father of Congo missions; that A. J. Gordon, the wisest counselor and the greatest president the Baptist Missionary Union of the United States ever knew; that Arthur Pierson, the best informed man on world-wide missions the twentieth century has seen, and that W. E. Blackstone, the missionary enthusiast of all Methodism; for that matter the overwhelming majority of the men and women that now face heathen peoples and call them to Christ, are premillennialists. These are not men easily discouraged. To them the gathering darkness suggests only the hour before the dawn; for them no problem is impossible of solution, because in "the coming Christ" they have One who is sufficient. They can lie down every night with the sweet sense that the work in which they have been engaged, incomplete as it is, if He come "at midnight, or at the cock crowing," will, under the touch of His hand, take final and fitting shape. We remember the story of one of the old artists whose students wrought in a great studio that he visited occasionally to suggest and instruct; and of the one young man that had formed the conception of a noble picture, but had been unable to produce it. Many

a time he had flung away his endeavor and started over. One evening, discouraged by his failure, and wearied by his efforts, he went to his lodging, leaving the attempt. That night the old master came in, and his eyes fell on the incomplete work. He saw at once the whole conception and realized also the struggles that had gone into the endeavor, and felt something of the sickened sense of the student before evident failure. Picking up the brush that had fallen from the nerveless grasp, he worked awhile, and lo, the work was done, and in the morning when the young painter came, he looked at it in wonder; he stood in a trance—amazed. But only a moment he questioned, and then he cried, "Oh, the master has come! The master has come! and the work is complete."

¶ That is the confidence of premillennarianism. That is the explanation of its historical ministry. "The Blessed Hope" is a suggestive appeal to the holiest living and to the highest endeavor, and to the utmost steadfastness.

¶ On the cross Christ cried, concerning the work of His first appearance, "It is finished." On the throne He will one day be able to say the same concerning the plan and purpose of His second appearance. It is the "Blessed Hope," and when the work of the church is complete, then, and not until then, will all saints know the part this expectation has played in the inspiration and employment and perfecting of the saints, to the praise of that God, who has promised the kingdoms of this world to His Son, and who will keep His word.

THE SIGNIFICANT SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

"Ye can discern the face of the sky, but ye cannot discern the signs of the times" (Matt. 16:3).

SERMONS on "The Signs of the Times" have had little or no fascination for me. It is difficult to get a proper perspective of the thing close at hand; and well nigh dangerous to dogmatically interpret the events of which one's life is a very part.

¶ For just thirty years, therefore, we have thought upon this subject without daring to speak to the same; and in making it the theme of this chapter we confess to both fear and trembling. The difficulties of a duty, however, do not absolve one from obligation to the same; and the much teaching of the Word of God concerning "the signs of the times"; and the remarkable movements of the century to which we belong combine in calling attention to this important and tremendous subject.

¶ The men to whom Jesus addressed this text were neither ignorant nor unlearned; they were the religious leaders of the hour. The Pharisees were the conservatives in theology and tranditionalists in teaching; the Sadducees were the religious skeptics—the self-named scientists, who took little stock in supernaturalism. The charge of the text is that neither of them properly discern and interpret "the signs of the times"; and that for this stupidity they are inexcusable.

¶ Certainly, then, the children of the twentieth century are still more remiss if they give no time or thought

to those great movements that have marked the approaching of the end of the age; and for this well-nigh universal ignorance the preachers and teachers of Christendom are responsible, if not reprehensible!

¶ It is with a hope of both discharging the minister's duty, and of making more clear to "the body of Christ" the religious significance of current events, that we propose this theme.

"THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES"

involve the crisis of the church and the call of God.

¶ What are some of them? Out of a vast number, let us select a few for brief consideration.

¶ Of first importance is **the proclamation of peace, and the preparation for war.** It is now a full score of years since the first Peace Conference was called at The Hague, and the "arbitration" of international difficulties became the slogan for representatives, statesmen, philosophers, scientists and plainer folk. Newspapers have made this slogan the big head line; magazines have multiplied articles devoted to its treatment; kings, emperors and presidents have found in it a popular theme for great public addresses, and ruling political parties have woven it prominently into their platforms. If one judged only by what has been taking form in public sentiment, phrasing itself in public speech and finding place on the printed page, he would naturally conclude that the armies and navies of the world were just ready for dissolution; and that in another decade neither uniformed soldier would mark the land, nor goverment-garbed sailor be seen at sea. But often philosophy falls dead before the mailed fists of fact; and the fact is, that never since nations had a being has the world been so

well armed for war; and while "Peace Conferences" are in session the fighting crowd, on land and sea, are alike being increased. As Dr. I. M. Haldeman says, "England, so long content to have a great navy and a small volunteer army, is now making a supreme effort to raise that army to an effective standard of 500,000 men. France is ready to respond in forty-eight hours with 500,000 soldiers, mobilized and fully equipped. Germany has under arms and ready to march at a moment's notice, 500,000, constituting the most perfect fighting machine ever put together. Spain has a 100,000 veterans with the memory of Cuba in their hearts. Italy has ready nearly another half million. Austria a full half million, trained, disciplined and magnificently furnished. Russia has a million men under arms—not merely reserves—she has these besides—but a million of men in barrack and camp, ready to fight, as never before. Japan has more than a half million, practically in the field, and a full million of equally disciplined reserves behind them—soldiers whose desperate bravery electrified and, almost, appalled the world. China is moving everything that she may possess an army of 500,000 soldiers equal to the most modern demands, and, already, has an artillery among the best. As you come westward and sweep the circle of the old continents again, you find Persia, the Persia that Rome never conquered, ready to take the field with troops furnished from western arsenals and instructed by officers from western armies. You will find Turkey with 500,000 men; and it is of tradition that, when soldiers fight well, it is said of them, no matter what nation they may be, they fight "like Turks." Greece has an army: the Balkans—the political lumber-room of

Europe—more or less filled with smoking firebrands—is crowded with soldiers (now menacing Turkey and endangering the peace of the world); while Switzerland is a nation of soldiers ready to spring from their Alpine heights at the first sound of war. . . . The nations of earth swarm with one another's spies, noting the means of defense and the easiest points of attack."

¶ This condition is duplicated at sea; and just now the increase of its navy is the supreme purpose of almost every nation under the sun. This is exactly what Jesus taught would come to pass as the end approached. "Ye shall hear of wars, and rumors of wars. See that ye be not troubled for all these things must come to pass," but the end is not yet, for "nations must rise against nations, and kingdoms against kingdoms" (Matt. 24:6-7). And, in this, the Son of God was only saying to His auditors what God's true prophets had proclaimed as the "Sign of the end." It is an ever increasing marvel to the student of the Scripture to see how perfectly Daniel foresaw events, and over what a long period of time his clear vision swept; and Daniel, speaking of the nations that should succeed the breaking up of the Roman empire, said "In the latter time of their kingdom, when the transgressors are come to the full, a king of fierce countenance, and understanding dark sentences, shall stand up. And his power shall be mighty, but not by his own power: and he shall destroy wonderfully, and shall prosper and work: and shall destroy mighty ones and the holy people. And through his ability he shall magnify himself in his heart, and prosper in his hand, and by peace shall destroy many; he shall also stand up against the Prince of princes; but he shall be

broken without hand" (Dan. 8:23-25). What a wonderful interweaving of the proclamation of "peace" and the execution of war in the seer's words. It is another instance of the Jeremiahad "Peace! Peace! when there is no peace" (Jer. 6:14).

¶ The very conditions that now exist are as strange as the world has ever known; and while the orators of the earth are giving the people promise of a cessation from all war, even the Christian nations of Europe are, as Campbell Morgan remarks, "Watching each other with a suspicion that is devilish and horrible."

¶ A second sign is **the search for truth and the acceptance of lies.** Paul, speaking of "the latter time" and "the revelation of that wicked one, whom the Lord shall consume with the breath of His mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of His coming" prophesies not only a large following for this man to come, but, concerning his disciples, declares, "God shall send them a strange delusion, to believe a lie, that they shall be judged who believe not the truth" (2 Thess. 2:10-12).

¶ "Strange delusion" is the adequate phrase! There never was a time when so many men were giving themselves to "scientific investigation"; and when so many things were exploited as "scientific" certainties. Indeed, we are told that it is the "Age of Science" and the men who employ the phrase mean by it that it is not the age of Biblical or other religious authority. The result of this philosophy, in the lives of men, is as strange as Scriptural, namely those who have set themselves to know the whole truth, have, in their very search, accepted "strange delusions"; and in their rejection of all sacred authority, have fallen into the most egregious

scientific errors, thus becoming teachers of thoughts and systems that are irrational to the point of folly, if not of insanity.

¶ Haeckel, one of the most noted among them, in his "Riddles of the Universe" rules God out of it; and so becomes an advocate of the insane philosophy that power does not involve personality, wisdom does not involve thoughtfulness, design does not involve a designer! In other words, the heavens do not "declare the glory of God," nor doth "the firmament show His handiwork." This justifies the language of the Psalmist, "The fool hath said in his heart, 'There is no God.'"

¶ The conclusion of their reasoning is no more false than the process of the same. Take, for instance, the theory of Evolution, now widely declared in scientific circles as the basis of all scientific investigation,—a base in a hypothesis which has never had any existence other than the vaporings of a man who made his reputation in science as Robert G. Ingersoll made his in religion, by departing so far from the truth as to call universal attention to himself.

¶ And yet, men, by the tens of thousands, in the Old World and in the New, are holding to this theory, and preaching it as a "scientific certainty," when there has never been found, on land or sea, a scintilla of scientific evidence in favor of the same.

¶ These same scientists have also denied the supernatural simply because the scalpel will not uncover and explain the same, and rejected it with bitterness on account of its having eluded their analysis. By the same process of reasoning they would be compelled to ally themselves with Mary Baker Eddy and deny the reality

of human existence. "A scholarly physician who went to Dr. P. H. Mell, that notable Southerner, and said, "Doctor, I would believe in Christianity if I could explain the supernatural generation of Christ," was sufficiently answered by Dr. Mell, who replied, "Can you explain natural generation in any case?" The physician hesitated, and then admitted, "I cannot."

¶ One could push this inquiry into a multitude of additional fields, and when he had finished, he would find the notable scientists of the world standing forth with such folly in their lips as President Elliott expressed when he said, "The religion of the future will be bound by neither dogma nor creed," as if a creedless conception could ever command attention or adoption from men; such folly as Dr. J. Woodland, of the university of Rochester, expressed when he said, "The myths and fables of the Bible will be laid aside, and the church will be founded on truth," as if "Truth" had an existence independent of the faithful record of human experience! To reach the acme of folly, let the much-advertised Prof. Foster of the Chicago University, voice himself: "Man cannot live without science! . . . Gone are the old ideas of religion; gone is the old notion of the divinity of the sacrament, of the efficacy of prayer, of the authority of the Scriptures, of the divinity of Christ; gone, even, is the former view of the immortality of the soul. And, there is in its place only the modern idea of efficiency, which emphasizes temporary success and does not answer the question of the rest of the spiritual. Caught up in the world-agony, the poor soul must find rest and refuge in the very bosom of reality." All of this is again in fulfillment of the Scriptures, con-

cerning those who "become vain in their own reasoning, and have their senseless hearts darkened; professing themselves to be wise, they become fools, exchange the truth of God for a lie, and worship the creature more than the Creator."

¶ **The profession of godliness and the practice of godlessness** is a third sign. Paul wrote to his junior, Timothy, saying, "Know this, that in the last days perilous times shall come, when men shall be self-lovers, money-lovers, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, unforgiving, false, accusers, incontinent, savage, haters of good, traitors, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasures rather than lovers of God; having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof" (2 Tim. 3:1-5).

¶ Have you never noticed that in the seven epistles to the seven churches (the great periods of church history are plainly marked) John, coming to the Laodicean period —the last of the seven—consequently the approaching end of the age, finds the church luke-warm, boasting itself, however, as "rich and increased with goods, and in need of nothing"; but, regarded from a spiritual standpoint "wretched and miserable, and poor and blind and naked." How graphic the words! "Laodicea" indicates that it is the popular church or church of the people; and the very boast reveals its aristocracy, and lays bare its spiritual poverty. When did the world ever see so many institutions bearing the name of Jesus and yet answering to this inspired description? Think of the Lenten season; lo, the im-pious of ten months and two weeks have turned to piety, and for full forty days propose to refrain, in part at least, from the devil's devices—

from dance hall, show house, and the more extravagant of the so-called social functions, that they may take on the forms of religion and profess the power of the same, till the Lenten days be passed; then to return to a worldliness which is but slightly exceeded by the world itself; and which, in most cases is identical with the same.

¶ The most of us remember D. Astley Cooper's famous painting, "The Pursuit of Pleasure"; and intelligent people perfectly understand that many of the members of the modern church neither find it in their heart to condemn that young Roman's pursuit, nor to refrain from scenes and occasions as inimical to the cause of Christ. The simple truth is that many modern churches are now planning, in their new structures, smoking rooms, dance halls, and an up-to-date stage, in the midst of which setting stands the cross of Christ, involving an inharmony which would be unthinkable to our puritan ancestors, but which is a fulfillment of prophecy, presenting the "abomination of desolation" spoken of by Daniel the prophet, "standing in the holy place" (Matt. 24:14). "Then shall the end come!"

¶ Now all of this involves

THE CRISIS OF THE CHURCH.

¶ It is a singular thing that Jesus turned immediately from making this charge against the Pharisees and Sadducees of the hour to the instruction of His disciples. Instruction is involved in the charge itself, and the church should attend, since her interests are at stake; and "the last days" are her testing time.

¶ This is true in many respects. Of three of them let me speak!

¶ (a) **The creed of the church is involved.** You can take any creed you please, adopted by an evangelical denomination, and the remark remains true. Every fundamental doctrine, framed by its authors, is now flouted! For a long time the teachings of Scripture concerning "sin" were undisputed; the world was sane enough not to deny its own experience; but alas, the time has come when teachers from the church have told us that there is "no such thing as sin." Instead of "transgression of the law" of God, we now have, as one writer puts it, "Failure to attain the ideal." Instead of "conviction of sin" we now employ "the pain of conscious imperfection."

¶ This "doctrine of devils" must necessarily be succeeded by another, namely, "the nonsense of the new birth." Dr. W. S. Rainsford, a progressive pastor, is quoted as absolutely opposed to conversion, or regeneration, saying, with appalling candor, " I never experienced it; neither did any member of my family. When I first began to preach I made the common mistake of compelling people to believe that they must be born again before they could become children of God." In other words, when first he began to preach, he was foolish enough to follow the Christ.

¶ (b) This all looks to another step, namely **the repudiation of the supernatural.** Dr. Lyman Abbott goes the full length of the Modern's logic and says, "The New Theology denies absolutely the old assumed distinction between the natural and the supernatural." And yet, as is they hesitated to part company entirely with the very terms of Scripture, Dr. Littlefield, in the Graded Lessons (now adopted by many Sunday Schools, and

eminating from the erudite Religious Educational Association), identifies the new birth with "adolescence," taking the same to be "physically, intellectually and spiritually the new birth."

¶ (c) But this is not all! **The Christ himself is questioned.** Beginning with an inoffensive speech akin to that which a recent writer employs in a volume on "Christianity and the Social Crisis," the Man from Nazareth is made the youthful prodigy of His period, whose growth in physical stature and mental acumen marks Him as a man of unusual might, to conclude at last, as another does, with a mythical figure whose historical standing is little more substantial than that of "the modern Santa Claus." Here again is the fulfillment of prophecy,—"false teachers" destined to arise in the latter times and bring in "destructive heresies," are even now "denying the Lord who bought them," and "many are following in their pernicious ways," forgetting the plain teaching of John that "whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father."

¶ Nor is this the end:

¶ (d) **The course of Christianity is threatened.** The hour of "Lo, here!" and "lo, there!" has arrived. Men are declaring the second coming of Christ to be not "in person" as was prophesied and promised, thus fulfilling Peter's words (2 Peter 3:3-10). The Socialists, after having anathematized His Name, are now claiming to embody His spirit; The Millennial Dawnists, having derided His eternity, are now telling their deluded followers that "He is in the secret chambers," and they alone know of His hiding, but He will manifest Himself in 1914.

¶ A few days since a "New Thought" woman came to me and said, "I am so glad you are looking for the coming of the Great Teacher, so am I," to which I was compelled to say, "I fear we are looking for very different teachers, and certainty for very different individuals." Behaia, with his three milions of dupes, is at once fulfilling prophecy and threatening Christianity, while the men and women of America who have adopted the phrase "Social service" and "Social reconstruction" (ignoring the spiritual element, and seldom naming Christ Himself), are even more to be feared.

¶ We are being told now that what men need is soup and sandwiches, not sermons and Scripture; and that to provide the former is a far more Christian act than to speak the latter; that the needs of the man are recreation not re-creation; and that the pulpit, supposed to be sacred to theology would serve a more useful end if converted into a theatrical stage. Those who speak after this manner are in increasing demand at six o'clock clubs; and are cheered to the core on after-dinner occasions! The old statement "The Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which is lost" is well nigh laughed out; and the plain meaning of "As the Father hath sent me, even so send I you," is no longer interpreted into a soul-winning responsibility.

¶ And yet the world is dying, and men and women with sin upon them are going before God to give an account for the deeds done in the body. It might not be a bad thing if some eloquent occupants of modern pulpits could have the experience of the late Charles Berry! You will remember the Lancashire girl, with a shawl over her head and clogs on her feet, who came to his door and

asked, "Are you a minister?" "Yes!" "Then I want you to come with me and get my mother in." Thinking it was a drunken brawl, he asked, "Why do you not get a policeman?" "No, no;" answered the girl, "My mother is dying, and I want to get her into salvation." "Where do you live?" "About a mile and a half from here." "Why don't you get some one nearer?" "We want you and you have got to come!" At first he was horrified with the thought of walking the streets at night in company with a girl with a shawl over her head, and he tried to dissuade her; but she would not be put off. At last he went! It was, as he suspected, a house of ill-fame, and the old woman was dying. Sitting down by the bed he talked to her of Jesus as a beautiful example. She answered, "Mr., that is no good for the likes of me! It is too late for an example, I can't live to imitate Him and I am a sinner!" He tried other philosophies. They were equally in vain and unsatisfying to the perishing soul. Then he remembered his mother's faith and began to tell her the Old Story of God's love; of Christ who died for sinful men. She cried, "Now you are getting at it! Go on; that is what I want, and that is what I must have or be lost forever!" And so, says Charles Berry, I got her in; and while I was about it, I got myself in!"

¶ This leads to the last point of this discussion.

THE CALL OF GOD.

¶ What is it? Perhaps no single sentence would suffice for its expression. Permit us three!

¶ 1. **It stands for "the faith once for all delivered."** We confess in advance that there is not a popular thing to defend today. The twentieth century calls for compromise, and absolutely demands "smooth" speech; and

the man, who will not accommodate it, comes in for harsher criticism of his conduct than he himself has ever pronounced against a creedless and Christless religion.

¶ And yet, only cowards surrender to that twentieth century call for "smooth words." One of Mazzini's declarations never had better occasion than now, and men called of God to preach the Gospel "once for all delivered," ought to be reminded of what Mazzini said, "Neutrality—that is to say, indifference between good and evil, the just and the unjust, liberty and oppression, is simply atheism." After all, is it not ours to fill up the sufferings of Jesus Christ? And if the teachers of His revealed truth should find it necessary to go with Him into the waves of calumny and be "baptized with the baptism that He was baptized with," or to the cross of Calvary and feel its cruel nails, still those apostles, if true, ought to hesitate in nothing, knowing that the only victory that can ever "overcome the world is the faith of those who love not their lives unto the death," but who at any cost will preach Christ and Him crucified as the solitary hope of sinking souls.

¶ It matters little what demands modern society may make upon us, or even what representatives of the modern church express! Jude enjoins us to tell its teachers and leaders that "the faith once for all delivered" is its solitary hope, the only basis upon which it can stand and be blessed. To fail in this is indeed, as one has declared, "to fall under the phychology of the religion of actual materialism, culture, license, and of the self-satisfied proclamation that man is God."

¶ 2. **"Strengthen the things that remain."** This is the word of Jesus to the church of Sardis; and, for that

matter, the word of Jesus to every true churchman the world over. The very phrase employed, "the things that remain" indicates that much has been removed already. That is the truth of history! Thousands of ministers have had their standing-ground taken away, and hundreds of churches have had their doctrinal foundations loosened; and Christians, out of number, have surrendered the most cherished convictions of Christian history. God is not giving to the world a fresh revelation. In fact, He can both sustain His own glory and conquer against any possible odds the world may present, without "the wise men after the flesh, and with not many mighty nor many noble," but rather with "the weak things of the world, He can confound the things which are mighty; and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to naught things that are: that no flesh should glory in God's presence" (1 Cor. 1:26-29).

¶ There are those who say that the battle has gone against us. I confess I do not belong to that company. My own ministry keeps me from any pessimism regarding this. It is just thirty years since, as a lad, I was ordained to this high calling. While holding a pastorate during this entire time, it has been my high privilege to put in from three to four months every year in evangelistic work, and the old "sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God" is certainly as effective today as it was then; and whether employed by the pastor in his own pulpit, or by the evangelist in the pulpit of others, I find it is unfaillingly "the power of God unto salvation." I am fully persuaded, therefore, that victory is to be the

portion of that preacher and of that people who stand for the "faith once for all delivered" and that the endeavor "to strengthen the things that remain" is as certain of success as are the power and promises of God assured.

¶ Let me conclude this volume by an appeal that we **strive together for the bringing back of the King.** Skepticism will never die while an unchained devil goes forth deceiving even the very elect. Sin will never cease to be the experience of men until Satan has felt the hand of the coming King. As for "social reconstruction," that will never be accomplished by the combined wisdom of the wise apart from the coming of the crowned Christ. We have something to do with His return! We have something to do with His ascension to the throne. We have more to do than John did when he cried, "Come Lord Jesus, and come quickly!" In one sense His crown is in our hands, and it will never bedeck His brow until by our loyalty and love, and unselfish service, and, may be, unthinkable sacrifice, we have placed it there.

¶ Let no one say, "This is asking too much of mortal men and weak women." The history of yesterday is the encouragement of tomorrow. Joan of Arc was an unknown girl, with neither wealth nor office nor honor at her command. But she heard the voice of God calling; and, insisting that He wanted her to crown Charles king of France, she deliberately set herself to the task! There were a thousand obstacles, and they looked insurmountable, everyone! And yet within three months she had lifted the siege of Orleans, and within six months she had seen the second part of the promise fulfilled and had sat with her banner in her hand at the high altar at Rheims while Charles was anointed, and she had

crowned him king. From the day this despised man received his anointing at the altar, the very people whose affections had been estranged, turned to him again, cured, as Creasy says, of their skepticism by the certainty they now felt that Charles was the favorite of heaven. The national feeling revived; people and soldiers rallied to his standard and the enemy became divided and dispirited; and poor, distracted France found peace and repose.

¶ It is only a little type of the greater truth that human hands can crown Christ King, and loyal hearts can make way for Him to the throne of the world; and, when that is done, and not till then, shall His Name be blessed forever, and the whole world become filled with His glory. Oh, to have part in that crowning! Oh, to lead one's people, to join in that enthronement! It were worthy the years!

¶ It is related of the great Dr. Schauffler that when he was doing his work in Constantinople, the Russian officials gave him no small annoyance, and he went one day to see the Russian ambassador. He heard Dr. Shauffler, and then said, "I will say to you frankly that my master, the Czar of all the Russias, will never suffer Christian missions to set their feet in the Turkish empire." Dr. Shauffler looked at him a bit, and then replied, "Your excellency; my Master, the Czar of all Heaven, will never ask the Czar of all the Russias where He may set His feet."

¶ Thank God the spot is located, "They shall stand on Mount Zion" and when He comes, not the Czar of Rus-

sia only, but every king shall fall down gefore Him, and all nations shall serve Him. It is ours to hasten that day! The Lord help us!

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